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MAXWELL.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "SAYINGS AND DOINGS."

"Critics, whene'er I write, in every scene,
Discover meanings that I never mean.
Whatever character I bring to view
I am the father of the child, 'tis true,
But, every babe his christ'ning owes to you.
'The Comic Poet's eye,' with humorous air
Glancing from Watling Street to Grosv'nor Square—
He bodies forth a light ideal train,
And turns to shape the phantoms of his brain,
Meanwhile your fancy takes more partial aim,
'And gives the airy nothings place and name.'"

COLMAN THE ELDER.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

HENRY COLBURN AND RICHARD BENTLEY,
NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1830.

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ERRATA.

VOL. I.

Page 1, line 5, *for* the Doctor, *read* Godfrey.
33, — 21, *et passim*, *for* Doctor, *read* Mr. Moss.
96, — 4, *for* imperious, *read* imperative.
163, — 22, *for* bravo, bravo, *read* brava, brava.
225, — 1, *for* bleach, *read* blanch.
232, — 6, *for* sundries, *read* sundry.
278, — 1, *for* theatres, *read* theatre.

VOL. II.

21, — 17, *for* indiscribable, *read* indescribable.
160, — 3, *for* her, *read* his.
241, — 11, *for* the, *read* no.
276, bottom line, *for* hearts of each were, *read* heart of each was.
281, — 1, *et passim*, *for* Crown, *read* George.
334, — 12, *for* should, *read* would.

VOL. III.

24, — 17, *for* illustration to, *read* illustration of.

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MAXWELL.

CHAPTER I.

Now, by my modesty, a goodly broker.
SHAKSPEARE.

"HELP yourself, and pass the wine, Mousetrap," said Maxwell, the surgeon, sitting after dinner *tête-à-tête* with the tame man of his family, Mr. Godfrey Moss.

"'Gad," said the Doctor, "what would the world think if they heard *me*, a quiet, middle-aged, retired country gentleman, dignified by the nick-name of Mousetrap?"

"Fairly earned by yourself," replied the surgeon. "Dubbed Mousetrap by a young lady, you surely cannot dislike the appellation;—besides, as you know, you have borne it now some few years in this house."

"Two or three and twenty, as I reckon," said Moss, "for it certainly arose in the first instance from your daughter Kitty's being unable to speak plain: and she is now, I rather think, somewhere about her five and twentieth year."

"It certainly arose from your own whimsical character," replied Maxwell: "my poor wife pronounced you a misanthrope; and so Kitty, who could pronounce nothing properly, contrived, by way of making the best of it, to jumble the word into Mousetrap—in which gin of her's you have ever since remained."

"With a little of your's to boot, Maxwell. I say, surgery boy," continued Moss, "before these genteel no-drinking times came into fashion, we have now and then managed a glass or two of toddy over the fire; *you* recounting the adventures of the past day—"

"—And you abusing everybody I happened to mention," said Maxwell.

"That's not *my* fault, Maxwell," said Moss; "the blame lies upon those who deserve the

censure; however, I believe I am much quieter than I used to be. I find the world is past improvement, and it is little use trying to mend it."

"If Kitty were here—" said Maxwell.

"—And sorry enough I am, she is not," replied Moss; "she is a good girl,—one of my splendid exceptions. What a treasure she has been to *you*, since your poor wife's death!—and when such a domestic cretur as she is,—so fond of home, and so bright an ornament of it, happens to be out, the loss is severely felt by a toddling body like me,—a thing of habit."

"It is seldom she gads about," said Maxwell, "but the trine temptation of a new play, a popular actor, and a private box, was too much even for *her* philosophy and forbearance, and she yielded."

"Aye, aye, she has got her sweetheart with her," said Moss, taking a huge pinch of snuff; a certain portion of which went the way all snuff should go, while by far the largest detachment scattered itself amongst the folds of his coat round his chest.

"Yes," said Maxwell, "I have hopes of happiness from that marriage, if we can bring it about. Apperton is rich and indefatigable in

business, with excellent city connexions, and a good property."

"Kate doesn't care a button for him," said Moss, pushing away snuff-box, wine-glass, plate, and all.

"How d'ye mean?" said Maxwell; "she receives his addresses, is civil and kind to him, and has gone so far as to tell me that she has no objection to him."

"Pleasant state of affection upon which two people are to marry," said Moss, "what the creturs call the negative school. Stuff, gammon,—if she takes my advice, she'll never have that 'stockbrokering cretur.'"

"But if she wishes to take mine, she will," said Maxwell.

"Ah! no doubt of that," said Moss, again stuffing his nose; "you are all for the siller—you have made a large fortune by extensive practice, you have got a son you want to make a gentleman of, and you have got a daughter for whom you want to get money in marriage. Mark my words, Mack: I don't say much, but like the birdums in the fable, I think the more. I am not one of your romantic boys, but I know the world; gold does not make happiness—Kittums

may give her hand to Apperton, but her heart is not there to give."

"Has she ever made you a confident, Mouse-trap?" said the surgeon.

"Not she—she knows I am not to be had," answered Moss; "she is quite up to me; I enter into no leagues or cabals—I know enough of the world to know that the more pains a man takes to please, the more he gets abused. I have enough to do to provide for myself and my own wants and worries—I am not going to trouble my head with the concerns of anybody else."

"Your old system, Moss," said Maxwell; "but do you really mean to say, that you suspect her of having an attachment elsewhere?"

"No," replied Moss; "her mind is too well regulated to suffer the attachment to exist. I don't believe she would give her hand to one, and keep her heart for another—she knows she must not encourage her genuine feelings, and she will conquer them. But she is a woman, and cannot help recollecting—no matter, she's a good cretur—and, if *you* please, we'll drink to her health and happiness."

Moss was quite right in his suspicions. Kate Maxwell *had* lost her heart before she knew Apperton; but the object of her affections had

been banished from her presence, and was following an honourable profession in a far distant country, whence, in all human probability, he never would return: and Kate, conscious that her father was inexorably resolved against sanctioning her union with the absent favourite, sought by every means in her power to overcome a feeling which it would have been positive undutifulness to cherish; and purposely mingled more than usual in society, after the departure of the object of her affections—sedulously avoiding the slightest allusion to him, and tremblingly alive to the painful trial of ever hearing his name.

Maxwell himself, to whom the reader has been somewhat unceremoniously introduced, in his own house, was, as may already have been discovered, a surgeon of great skill, and consequent high reputation; and, perhaps, no man could live happier, more generally beloved, or more universally respected, than he did. His abilities had procured him extensive practice, his practice produced a handsome revenue; and although he was generally considered to have amassed a large fortune, and to be perfectly independent of the world, still he felt that, while health and fame were yet his own, there was no reason for retiring from a profession, of which

he was one of the leaders, and by the continued exercise of which, besides finding occupation for an active mind, he might still accumulate wealth for the benefit of a son and daughter, bequeathed to his paternal care by a fond and affectionate wife, several years before the period at which this narrative commences.

Maxwell had prudently and progressively risen to his present eminence. His first start in life was in a small, neat house, in Hatton Garden, where he commenced practice in the united character of surgeon and apothecary; on his marriage with the daughter of a member of the same profession, he removed to Bedford Row, shaking off the trammels of the shop and bottles, and practising only as a surgeon. In this residence he remained for several years, till his success at the western end of the town induced him to approach the scene of his practice, and shift his quarters to Lincoln's Inn Fields: whence, after the death of his lady, he again removed to one of the streets in the vicinity of Burlington Gardens, where we now find him taking his wine with his friend Mousetrap.

"And where's Master Ned to-night?" said Moss; "is *he* gone to the play to see the deluded creturs act—or is he down the area there, in

Stone Buildings, learning to draw conveyances, for which, Mack, between you and me, he is not so fit as a coach-horse?"

"Probably not," said Maxwell.

"Then why do you keep him poking and grubbing down in a cellar, with his nose nailed to a desk all day long? I suppose you expect to see him Lord Chancellor."

"The road is open to him," said Maxwell.

"Ah! so it is to a great many other idle fellows," said Moss, "and a good many of them take to it; but not the road to the woolsack—he has not a turn that way. He did, by good luck, get a degree at Oxford, without plucking, and I am told, is as good a puller as there ever was in Christ Church; but, depend upon it, he is not so good a sitter: besides, he's too rich for a lawyer; I never knew a rich man make a lawyer in my life. His poor mother used to talk to me of the law—stuff—trash—gammon; —it was no use affronting her, poor dear old body, but the truth is, he arn't got it in him."

"Why, I admit," said Maxwell, "the constant look-out upon the glacis of Lincoln's Inn Garden, from the sunken story of our friend Diveandpore's chambers, is not an enlivening prospect. However, Moss, if he should be idle,

there is his fair cousin, with her large fortune, ready for him."

"What, Jenny Epsworth?" cried Moss, pushing away his box again;—"the demented body!—I think I see her; a cretur with one leg shorter than the other, and a nose like the twisted gnomon of a sun-dial. Trash, Mack! he will never marry she, take my word for it; but, as the country fellows say in my part of the world, he has gotten a friend as 'wull:'—that Major Overall—the little, lying, dandy, traveller chap—will cut out our Neddy—he'll marry—dot and carry one—see if he don't."

"Upon my word, Moss," said Maxwell, "you are more censorious than ever, and you use such extraordinary phraseology, and deliver your ideas in such very odd language, that my new butler, Hopkins, stares with amazement whenever he comes into the room while you are speaking."

"Try him *now*, Mack," said Moss; "the bottle is empty, and as them courting creturs are gone to the play, we must do something to while away time till they come back."

"Ring the bell, Moss," said Maxwell; "I have no visits to-make to-night, so I am indifferent about it."

"What, no groans to hear?" said Moss,—"no guineas to get?—no legs or arms to cut off?—deary me, how dull you must find yourself."

The arrival of Hopkins checked the details of Maxwell's supposed miseries, and the new bottle was ordered.

In spite of Moss's caricature of his host's pursuits, it seems pretty clear that none of our fellow-creatures enjoy life more than the successful member of one of the learned professions. There is, it is true, constant toil: but there are constant excitement, activity, and enthusiasm; at least, where there is not enthusiasm in a profession, success will never come—and as to the affairs of the world in general,—the divine, the lawyer, and the medical man, are more conversant and mixed up with them, than any other human beings—cabinet ministers, themselves, not excepted.

The divine, by the sacred nature of his calling, and the higher character of his duties, is, perhaps, farther removed from an immediate contact with society; his labours are of a more exalted order, and the results of those labours not open to ordinary observation; but the lawyer in full practice knows the designs and devices of half our acquaintance; it is true, professional

decorum seals his lips, but *he* has them all before him in his "mind's eye,"—all their litigations and littlenesses,—all their cuttings, and carvings, and contrivings. He knows why a family, who hate the French with all the fervour of British prejudice, visit Paris, and remain there for a year or two; he can give a good reason why a man who delights in a well preserved property in a sporting country, with a house well built and beautifully situated, consents to "*spare it*," at a reduced price, to a man for whom he cares nothing upon earth: and looks at the world fully alive to the motives, and perfectly aware of the circumstances, of three-fourths of the unconscious actors by whom he is surrounded.

The eminent medical man stands, if not upon higher ground, at least in a more interesting position. As he mingles with the gay assembly, or visits the crowded ball, he knows the latent ills, the hidden, yet incurable disorders of the laughing throng by which he is encircled; he sees premature death lurking under the hectic flush on the cheek of the lovely Fanny, and trembles for the fate of the kind-hearted Emily, as he beholds her mirthfully joining in the mazy dance. He, too, by witnessing the

frequently recurring scenes of death, beholds the genuine sorrow of the bereaved wife, or the devoted husband,—and can, by the constant, unpremeditated exhibitions of fondness and feeling, appreciate the affection which exists in such and such places, and understand, with an almost magical power, the value of the links by which society is held together.

Far beyond the even tenor of exalted idleness is the happiness which springs from practical utility, varied by recreation and amusement, which the best and most agreeable grades of society afford. The never-failing shot, the infallible billiard-player, however much delighted he may feel with his excellence, cannot enjoy so much positive interest in the sport or the game, as *he* who, ordinarily qualified for the enjoyment of either, has not reduced his bird or his ball, his hazard or his hare, to what may be called a *dead* certainty. There *may be* an anxiety created in the bosom of the sure performer, but it is the anxiety of maintaining an already established reputation, totally distinct from the intrinsic interest in the thing actually to be done, which is felt by those who are sufficiently proficient to render doubt admissible, although the attain-

ment of the object is infinitely more probable than its loss.

Thus it is that the possessor of vast wealth, without a pursuit, takes his enjoyments as mere matters of course, and feels no more pleasure in the luxury with which he is surrounded, than the commoner, in a much lower sphere, experiences in the enjoyment of much more humble pleasures. Enjoyment, indeed, is altogether comparative; and without some variation of the scene, it is impossible properly to appreciate the value of comfort and splendour. To enjoy life with all its acuteness,—to be deeply moved by the sorrows of others, or highly elevated by our own happiness, it is necessary to mingle with all classes, to see such scenes as naturally fall under the observation of professional men, to hear such tales as meet their ears, and, in short, to participate more or less in the various pains and pleasures, which Providence, in its wisdom, has assigned as the lot of those who are forced, as it is colloquially called, "to fight their way through the world." There is more healthful exercise for the mind in the uneven paths of middling life, than there is on the Macadamized road of fortune. Were the year all summer, how tiresome would be the green leaves, and the

bright sunshine—as, indeed, those will admit, who have lived in climates where vegetation is always at work.

Maxwell was one of those who had mixed generally with the world, and knew it well. There were points upon which, like all the rest of us, he was blind: and, amongst others, perhaps, the promised happiness of his daughter, and the extraordinary talents of his son, were two. However, so long as his friend Moss continued an inmate of his house, there was no great chance of his either continuing well satisfied with himself, or extremely proud of his children. Plain speaking was Mousetrap's distinctive characteristic; his conversation abounded in blunt truisms, founded upon a course of thinking somewhat peculiar to himself, but which, when tried by the test of human vice and human folly, proved very frequently to be a great deal more accurate than agreeable.

"Are you sure, Mack," continued Moss, as he commenced the fresh bottle, "that that Apperton is as rich as he makes himself out to be? I know some of them brokering boys are worth a million on Monday, and threepence on Thursday—all in high feather one week, and poor waddling creturs the next."

"I tell you he is a man of great property," said Maxwell.

"Ah!" said Moss, "you tell *me*, because *he* tells *you*. I never saw anything the day we went to call on him but a dark hole of a counting-house, with a couple of clerk chaps, cocked up upon long-legged stools, writing out letters—a smoky fire-place—two or three files, stuck full of dirty papers, hanging against the wall—an almanack, and a high railed desk, with a slit in a panel, with 'bills for acceptance' painted over it;—that's all stuff—gammon—trash. I like to see warehouses and hogsheads, and casks and crates, and bales, and boxes.—Don't you understand?"

"But Apperton has nothing to do with bales and boxes," said Maxwell; "he is a stock broker, of first-rate eminence."

"Oh! that's it," said Moss, shaking off the snuff again—"a bull and bear boy!—Why, I suppose now, that chap would not belong to Crockford's for the whole world—and yet all's fair in the alley. Oh!—marry Kitty to *him* by all means—they are the chaps 'wot' makes time-bargains—they speculate for thousands, having nothing in the world, and then at the wind-up of a week or two, pay each other what they call the

difference; that is to say, the change between what they cannot get, and what they have not got."

A thundering knock at the street door announced some visitor, or, perhaps, the family party returned from the play. Much to the astonishment of the two convivialists, it turned out to be the latter: and into the parlour, after having proceeded more than half way up stairs towards the drawing-room, bounded Miss Kitty Maxwell, Mr. Apperton, and Mr. Edward Maxwell, junior.

"Where is Mrs. O'Connochie?" said Maxwell.

"She would not come in, Sir," replied Kate, kissing her father's cheek with all her usual affectionate kindness; "it is too late, and she is too tired—and Dr. O'Connochie has got a touch of the gout, and—"

"Well, Kittums," said Moss, "give me your hand, my girl—how have you been entertained at the playhouse?"

"Why," exclaimed Edward, "Kate did nothing but cry all the time Young was acting—and there was Miss——! What was that pretty girl's name, Apperton?—the heroine—who was forced to marry one man while she was in love with another."

"That's disagreeable enough," said Moss, turning to Miss Maxwell, "arn't it, Kittums?"

"I thought the play infernally stupid," said Apperton; "for *my* part, I did not understand it."

"Umph!" said Moss, bending forwards, and taking a huge pinch of snuff.

"It has made my head ache," said Kitty.

"And made me most uncommonly hungry," said Apperton.

"And me most particularly thirsty," said Edward.

"Oh! the delights of play-going," groaned Moss.

In a few minutes all the requisite refreshments were produced, and, after a somewhat hasty, and not very happy looking repast, the little party broke up for the night. Apperton displayed a wonderful agility in oyster eating—Edward quaffed copious drafts of Combe, Delafield & Co. —Kate spoke little—Maxwell seemed thoughtful—and Moss made himself a large glass of hot gin and water, with sugar in it.

When they separated, Apperton departed for the City—Edward to *his* room—and then Kate to *hers*. Moss put on his great coat, and arming himself with his umbrella, took his leave. As

he shook hands with Maxwell, not choosing to trust himself with words, he made a face inimitably expressive of his conviction that Apperton was a blockhead, and that Kitty was quite aware of it.

The present position of the family may now be gathered by the reader. The matter of fact of Maxwell, and the broad caricature of Moss, will have nearly explained the "existing circumstances."

Kate, perhaps, requires a more minute description. She was, as Moss surmised, at the period of which I speak, some four, perhaps five and twenty. Like Liston in the play, she was not what is called regularly handsome; but she had fine eyes—an expressive countenance—white teeth, and a good figure. Her accomplishments were those which, in these days of refinement, every tolerably educated girl is supposed to possess; her manners were extremely pleasing; her disposition beyond compare amiable; and, having been now for several years accustomed to the entire control and management of the domestic concerns of her surviving parent, promised to be to *him* who should be so fortunate as to win her heart and obtain her hand, the best of all possible good things—an excellent wife.

If we were to take Mr. Moss's view of her

evidently intended husband, Mr. Apperton, the stockbroker, we should have very little to do but to set him down for a blockhead, and pray that he might never arrive at the consummation of *his* happiness, seeing how likely it was to prove the destruction of hers. However, having already premised that old Godfrey was a bit of a caricaturist, we must look at this worshipper of Mammon through another, and perhaps, a less jaundiced medium.

Apperton was, in the class of society in which he moved, what may be called an average man—the balance on the credit side of his character being made up of worldly knowledge, and a talent (improved by sedulous application and constant practice) for "making money." Moss, in *his* calculation, never took that side of the account into consideration; he saw only Apperton's love of gain, and his devotion to wealth, without entering, per contra, the laudable ambition of rising in the world, and the honourable desire of rendering himself worthy the acceptance of so superior a person as Miss Maxwell.

It is true that Apperton's mental qualities were somewhat confined—his energies had been directed to one point:—to *him* matters of taste were matters of trouble; his mode of valuing a fine piece of

sculpture, or a beautiful picture, was by inquiring what it would fetch, or how much it had cost. For music he had no ear—for poetry, no fancy. The play tired—the opera distracted him. In fact, his mind was in the funds, and his pleasure in his income; there he laboured and toiled. Speculations, the greatest and the most minute, were deemed equally worthy his attention, and a discount to the amount of three halfpence was received by him with as much care and punctiliousness as if it were a sum likely to liquidate the national debt. But he was good natured, and, when pleased and gratified himself, anxious to please and gratify others—so that if Miss Maxwell had no chance of enjoying with him the exquisitely tender affection which only congenial minds and dispositions can feel (all chance of which she had surrendered when she lost the first and only object of her love), she might fairly expect that rational happiness which, founded on esteem and regard, and the suitableness of a match, is the ordinary lot of persons who marry late in life, especially where the woman marries not her first love.

Moss knew every turn of Kate's mind. She was an enthusiast in matters of taste, without being affected or blue; she admired, without en-

vying, talent; and had sufficient judgment to appreciate the works of others, without assuming the airs of criticism, or trying the scheme of imitation. It is clear enough that if she married Apperton (and it seemed a settled thing that it was to be), she would make herself and her husband comfortable—happy, perhaps, is too strong a word; but comfort was quite as much as he could wish for, and quite as much as she could expect. Principle and reason would render her a good wife: and she was greatly encouraged in taking a favourable view of the marriage by the reflection, that her union with Apperton would meet her father's wishes, and, above all, not separate her from his society; for in case their union took place, it was stipulated that the young, or, rather, the new-married couple, should continue to reside at Maxwell's house,—an arrangement rendered a *sine qua non* on the old gentleman's part, on account of the comforts and advantages which he derived from the presence of his daughter as head of his establishment.

This sort of rational settlement is far too unromantic to be at all interesting; but when it is recollected, that the swain had reached his forty-fourth year, and the nymph her twenty-fifth, some allowance may be made for the unsen-

timental considerations which filled the mind of the latter,—the affection of the former being directed, over and above the personal and mental attractions of Miss Katherine, to a certain sum of fifteen thousand pounds, three per cent. consols, which was to be transferred to him on the day of the wedding. Far be it from me to surmise that this paltry amount, in any material degree, influenced the addresses of the lover; his acquaintance with Maxwell had originally commenced by Maxwell's employing him, professionally, to invest the savings of his income in different approved securities: and, through that channel, he had become intimate, not only with the affairs of the family, but with the family itself, of which he had latterly become one of the constant associates: for it should be told, that Maxwell never dined out, and, therefore, always kept places at his table for some half-dozen intimate friends, of whom one or two, or sometimes more, were constantly present at his hospitable board.

Everybody has observed the assimilating powers of constant association. In the outset of the acquaintance of Apperton and Miss Maxwell, love never entered either of their heads, or either of their hearts. Apperton was introduced,—

came, and dined—passed the evening, with somewhat of restraint—listened to Miss Maxwell's singing without understanding it—and submitted to Moss's jokes, without relishing them; but time, and a frequent repetition of the visit, smoothed down the difficulties: and after three or four months of that sort of domesticated intercourse, to which we have referred, Miss Maxwell began to feel better pleased when Apperton was there, than when he was not; and Apperton felt happier at Maxwell's than any where else. To Kate, in his absence, Maxwell had spoken highly of Apperton's activity and zeal, in securing him great pecuniary advantages—and praised his clearness and correctness, his readiness, and his principle. To him, in Kate's absence, Maxwell, with all the feelings of a fond father, had extolled her excellent qualities—and having this high opinion of his friend and finance minister, threw out hints, not to be misunderstood, of his ready compliance with the offer of any man who could make his daughter happy; and then proceeded to detail his views with regard to her fortune; until, at last, these two persons found themselves, as it were, on the brink of a marriage, never having, up to the moment of which I am speaking, "talked of love."

Katherine, however, had not been left *loverless* during the period of her life at which young ladies generally attract the attention of young gentlemen. The affair of her heart which was blighted, and to which I would rather not refer, was so deeply rooted there, that she rejected offers which might have produced comfort, and even splendour; but at present, upon consulting her feelings, she admitted to herself, —considering, as I have already premised, that she had abandoned all hope of that sort of happiness of which she once had dreamed,—that, in the worldly point of view, in which she was conscious Apperton would look at it, marriage was a prudent step, especially, permitted as she would be, to remain under her paternal roof,— a stipulation which overruled her most serious objection—that the state of woman alone in the world, is desolate and helpless: and seeing that, in the event of her beloved parent's death, she would have no living relations nearer than great aunts, (and they residing in the north of Scotland,) and a madcap brother, who, the moment he came into possession of the old gentleman's property, would certainly marry—perhaps ill, perhaps well—nobody could calculate which—she decided for the acceptance of Apperton: which

decision she definitively came to, on the very night we begin our story; on that very evening in which our sarcastic friend, Mousetrap, decided that she "did not care a button for him."

One most important obstacle, however, remained in the way of her accepting the stock-broker just yet; perhaps the reader may already anticipate it.

He had not yet made her an offer.

CHAPTER II.

"Are you a suitor to the maid you talk of—
YES or NO?"

SHAKSPEARE.

THERE are with all great affairs smaller affairs connected, so that in the watchwork of society, the most skilful artist is sometimes puzzled to fix upon the very little wheel by which the greater wheels are worked. Nobody who saw the anxiety of Ned Maxwell to second the schemes of Apperton, or rather his father, (for Apperton did not appear so sensitively alive to her charms or merits,) upon the heart and hand of his sister Katherine, would perhaps be prepared to account for his solicitude upon the point, who did not know that the elder Maxwell always expected his son to play croupier

at his dinner table, and in that capacity to do his best to entertain the guests who were seated round it. Not even the representations of Mr. Diveandpore, that evening studies in the basement of Stone Buildings were essential to his son's future elevation in his profession, could induce the surgeon to dispense with the society of this favoured scion of his stock; so that the young gentleman found himself tethered, as it were, to the paternal mahogany—a circumstance little in accordance with his tastes and desires for the enjoyment of that sort of evening diversion which persons at his time of life delight to take, in theatres and other places of resort and amusement, peculiar to the middling classes of London society. By the marriage of his sister with Apperton, the office of vice-president would devolve, if not entirely, yet at least whenever he desired leave of absence, upon his future-brother-in-law, of whose favour, in his father's eye, he had no doubt, and who from his standing in life and knowledge of the world, was even better calculated to perform the duties and functions of such a station, than the inexperienced youth which Ned professed to be; and who, if he were better initiated or more versed in the ways of society, than he appeared to be

when at home, naturally laboured under a certain degree of awe in the presence of his father, which prevented his exhibiting to their full extent his powers of conversation, and his talents for amusing a circle of friends, which upon other occasions, when restraint was removed, and he suffered his genius to go in a snaffle instead of a curb, were spoken very highly of.

Thus on all hands it appeared to be settled that Miss Maxwell was to be Mrs. Apperton, and upon all occasions when the agreeable society usually at her father's was assembled, people seemed to defer to Apperton as one of the family, and associate him and the daughter of their host in their thoughts, and even in their conversations, as if the thing were actually settled; and settled it would have been, long before the period to which we are referring, had not Moss happened to take up his quarters in the house for his annual four months' visit. His constant presence prevented the social confidential after-dinner chat, which had *he* been away would doubtless now and then have occurred between Apperton and Maxwell upon this most interesting subject: for at hardly any other period of the day did they meet, except perhaps to transact pecuniary business; and Heaven knows

love and money are as little likely to mingle in the same conversation, as oil and vinegar in the same bottle.

It was evident to those who saw clearly, that Maxwell was intent upon the marriage; and there seemed every day an increased anxiety upon his mind, touching the matter, which was not easily to be accounted for, when the relative situations of the parties were taken into consideration. There was something more than met the eye in the interest which the surgeon appeared to take in the stockbroker, and a mystery in the desire he felt to unite his child to his man of business: for such in fact was Apperton. The truth is, that Apperton had assailed Maxwell on his weak side; he had taught him the means, or fancied means, of increasing his already large realized fortune, to an amount far beyond his utmost expectations. These suggestions, which in fact produced their intimacy, were made during the year in which speculations of every sort were offered to the public; when companies sprang up on every side, and loans were in the market for every nation in the universe; when every man dived into mines, and dabbled in canals; when gold was to be found in granite rocks, and pearls in

cockle-shells; and when a thousand per cent. was reckoned too small a return for the capital expended. It was at this period that the skilful financier, the enterprizing projector, so thoroughly convinced the surgeon of the certainty of his success in accumulating thousands by an outlay of hundreds, that Maxwell not only confided his funds to the management of this approved Chancellor of his Exchequer, but was anxious to make an alliance for his daughter, which, while it would naturally increase the personal interest of Apperton for the welfare of her family, would place her in the midst of wealth and splendour, and increase her fifteen thousand pounds at least tenfold, under the skilful administration of her enterprising husband.

One evening at length, the adhesive Dr. Moss happened to be absent at some club festival, to which he annually repaired, and Edward having fulfilled his diurnal duties, at the foot of the table, had got "leave of absence" for an hour or two, and no stranger being present, Maxwell and Apperton found themselves *tête-à-tête* after dinner. The conversation between them had been carried on for more than an hour with an undiminished interest—the subject under discussion

being the great advantage likely to arise from the establishment of the North Shields Sawdust Consolidation Company, in which Apperton told Maxwell there were still seventy-four shares to be purchased; they were hundred pound shares, and were actually down at eighty-nine, would be at fifteen premium on the following Saturday, and must eventually rise to two hundred and thirty, for reasons which he gave in the most plausible manner, and which were in themselves perfectly satisfactory, as he said, to the "meanest capacity;" a saying with which it might have been perfectly safe to agree.

Whether Maxwell became a purchaser of the valuable scrip of this corporation or not, is not very important, but certain it is, that after the financial *exposé* of Mr. Apperton had ended, the conversation flagged—each of the characters of the drama sipped his wine, and, sipping, looked at the fire. Maxwell cast his eyes off the grate, and fixed them for a moment upon Apperton—Apperton sighed accidentally, and then sipped again.

"I don't think Kate is looking well," said Maxwell.

"Don't you, Sir?" said Apperton.

"She is out of spirits," said Maxwell. "I

think there is something on her mind—something she does not like to talk about—I—"

"It is love, perhaps," said Apperton.

"Umph!" said the surgeon; "*I* have thought of that."

"And of the object, Sir?" said the stock-broker.

"Why, partly."

"Major Overall, perhaps?" said Apperton; "or our friend Moss?"

"Moss!" said Maxwell; "you are joking. What! Kitty in love with Mousetrap? no, no, you haven't hit it yet."

"Nor am I likely," said Apperton. "Whoever is the object of her choice will be a happy man, Mr. Maxwell."

"I am happy you think so," said the surgeon. "Have you never fancied that her affections might have settled upon you?"

"Me! Mr. Maxwell," cried Apperton, who knew exactly to what the observations of his future father-in-law tended, and who was anxious to ascertain his view of the case, and the state of Kitty's mind, before he ventured upon an offer which might not only offend the young lady, but exclude him from the convenient and agreeable run of the house, but even displease her

father, and so lose him the influence which he at present possessed over all his worldly property.

"You," said Maxwell. "If I were asked *my* opinion of the state of her feelings, I should say that you are the person upon whom her affections are fixed: however, it is a doubt very easily solved—you have my full sanction to make the inquiry yourself, and I think I can almost ensure you a reception agreeable to my wishes and your own."

"Of Miss Maxwell, Sir," said Apperton, "we have often conversed; spoken of the arrangements desirable in establishing her in life; of your wish to retain her in your house; of her good qualities; of her valuable acquirements; and of her delightful accomplishments; but we have hitherto spoken only hypothetically of her husband:—am I indeed to understand that I have your permission and authority to address her as a lover?"

"Both, Apperton, both!" cried the old gentleman; "do it this very evening—strike while the iron is hot. I have two visits to make: let me see by your countenance on my return, that the wish of my heart is realized, and I shall be truly happy."

"I can hardly flatter myself with success,"

said Apperton; "for frequent and almost confidential, I may call them, as my conversations have been with your daughter, I do not recollect that love ever formed the topic of any one of them."

"So much the better," said Maxwell; "what does Sterne say, that love is no more made by talking of it, than a black pudding would be. Habit, association, assimilation of tastes, communion of thought, kindness without pretension, solicitude without effort, a tacit agreement and a silent sympathy; these are the excitements and stimulants of the only sort of love that is worth thinking of. The die-away, sighing, sonnet writing days of boyish passion, are past with you, Jack; but the tempestuous violence of youth has been supplanted by a rational, well regulated, prudential feeling, which, after all, is the feeling desirable in this world, where married people no more than single ones, can live upon dew, or sleep on rosebuds. Reason is the sure foundation of all schemes for mortal happiness; and you and Kitty are, to *my* mind, about as reasonable a pair of God's creatures as I know. I hear the carriage driving up to the door—I must be off to my appointments. It is contrary to my usual principle, and certainly to my ordinary practice,

to move after dinner, but I have two patients to-night in a precarious state: one a man of the highest class, the other one of the lowest;—to the former I go, because his rank enforces the attention which his wealth amply repays; to the latter, because his poverty and distress would leave him desolate, if somebody did not volunteer to watch over his sufferings. However, neither of these visits will occupy any great length of time, and it will not soon occur again, perhaps, that we shall be without visitors. Evening, the poets tell us, is the congenial season for love-making—woman's heart and looks—

> ——— 'Kindle when the night returning
> Brings the genial hour for burning.'

And so, Jack, as faint heart never won fair lady——"

"——The carriage is at the door, Sir," said a servant, inopportunely entering the dinner parlour.

"I am coming," said Maxwell. "This, Jack, is the very time for you—lose it not, as you value our dear love."

"You shall be obeyed, Sir," said Apperton, "let the result be what it may. I must, however, add my apprehensions that—"

"——Not a word—not a word about them,"

cried the surgeon. "Kate knows my wishes—I firmly believe they are in accordance with her own —so success attend you;" saying which, and shaking his intended son-in-law cordially by the hand, Maxwell stepped into his carriage to visit his patients, and Apperton proceeded deliberately up stairs, to prefer his suit to Kitty, in the drawing-room.

Arrived there, he found the amiable Kate alone, but assiduously employed in arranging papers relative to the domestic concerns of her father's establishment, seeking as it were, a moment's relief from the ordinary routine of arrivals and visitors, to bring up the arrears of business, to which with exemplary diligence and readiness she applied herself in her parent's service.

"At work, industrious treasurer?" said Apperton, as he approached the sofa where she was seated; "always doing good, Miss Maxwell."

"Always endeavouring to make myself useful when I can," said Kate, still proceeding with her avocation. "Will you ring the bell, and order yourself coffee?" continued she.

"None for me," said Apperton, placing himself on a chair next to the sofa.

"You always take coffee?" said Kate.

"Not to-night," replied the lover, whose em-

barrassment became, if not yet visible to his companion, quite unequivocal to himself. "I have been speaking on matters of great interest to your father."

"Possibly," said Kate; "but how they should interfere with your taking a cup of coffee now, I do not very clearly comprehend. I believe the consultations of the Divan itself are enlivened by the enjoyment of that fragrant beverage."

"Yes," said Apperton, not knowing exactly what he was saying, nor probably what she alluded to, "I believe they are—but"—and here he paused, and watching the taper fingers of his amiable companion as they untied this parcel, and arranged that pacquet, he began to feel a nervous anxiety to commence *the* subject, and a doubt upon his mind whether he dare venture upon the decisive preliminary measure of catching hold of one of Kate's hands, by way of leading to the discussion in which he so earnestly desired to engage her. A silence ensued.

"Why what *is* the matter, Mr. Apperton?" said Kate—"has there been any bad news in the City, and a proportionate fall, or any good news, and a consequent rise in your favourite funds, which has been disagreeable to you?"

"I am in a situation of great difficulty," said

Apperton, "and I hardly know how to extricate myself."

"Condescend to consult me," said Kate, "and I will advise without fee or reward."

"I believe you would be the very best councillor I could consult," said Apperton, "since you have not only the power of suggesting the best course for me to take, but the still greater power of ending all my difficulties."

"I—I—have the power of influencing your fate?" said the young lady.

"Indeed you have," said Apperton, gaining something like courage from the apparent good will of Miss Kate to keep up the conversation in the strain he most desired. "I look to you, Miss Maxwell, not only as my best adviser, but the sole judge in my cause—we have been now for some time so constantly associated—our interests in your excellent father so shared and divided between us—our amusements so much in common—our—" During the utterance of these few words Kate's heart beat rapidly—the writings before her lost their distinctness—her cheeks flushed—a chill ran over her limbs—she breathed quickly. Apperton saw the emotion he had created, and caught her hand, which had just dropped the pen—the seizure was unresisted—

he pressed it to his lips—they spoke not—again he pressed her hand—she turned her fine expressive eyes towards him, half filled with tears, as they were—he felt her tremble. At such a moment silence is the most convincing eloquence—it was clear what must be the result—he drew her towards him—essayed to speak—her eyes were again downcast, and she seemed to wait in dread and suspense the words that were to follow.

The sudden stoppage of a carriage, succeeded by a loud rattling knock at the street door, and a peal upon the bell, announced an arrival.

"Oh! for mercy's sake let me go," exclaimed Kate, jumping up: "pray, pray, put away these papers for me—I cannot be seen at this moment. Who can these people be?"

"Promise to return soon, Kate," said Apperton, resolved to fix his fate upon her answer to the simple request, which, if granted, would, he thought, decide the greater one.

"I will," said Kate, covered with blushes; and with a look that even a stockbroker could not misconstrue, she passed through the back drawing-room to the second staircase, in order to escape from the visitors—there was no light—Apperton attended her to the door. Some

mystic, magical, masonic sign, I suppose, had during that short interval, confirmed his hopes, for he returned to the drawing-room glowing with the proud consciousness of conquest, thrilling with pleasure, and not quite certain whether he stood upon his head or his heels.

"Mr. Moss and Major Overall," said a servant, announcing the arrivals.

Two worthies from the other side of the Styx would have been more welcome to Apperton than the snarling Godfrey, and the superlative Major.

"Hey dey," said Moss, "where's Kate?—what's gone with the Kittum cretur?—what no tea—no coffee, and very little fire—sad doings. Where's the grand carver himself—what's gone with Maxwell?"

"He is labouring in his vocation," said Apperton; "visiting his patients."

"While I'm losing mine," said Moss. "So that's the way—he goes peeping into holes, and scraping bones, and tyeing up legs to get money, in order to throw it away in the hunt after more. Never mind, we must have some tea and toast—eh, Major?"

"I never take tea," said the Major—a fair, sharp set man, with large blue eyes, and a small

figure, a shrill voice, a dominant passion for superlatives, and a superlative contempt for his own country, which he incessantly expressed, in a voice the shrillest that ever was heard—"never—no, never take tea—depend upon it tea is low—vulgar—terrible—dreadful—unwholesome—poisonous—destructive; coffee, when you can get it good, which one never does in England, is healthy—refreshing—excellent—but tea—coarse—low."

"Well, well—never mind, Major," said Moss—"I have never set my foot out of England yet, and never will if I can help it; and certainly not, till there is a suspension bridge across the Straits from Dover to Calais. I like my tea,—but then I must have my Kittums to make it for me. Stockbroker-boy, ring the bell—I'll do as much for you when I'm as young. Let's know where the cretur is; *she* is not gone visiting, I suppose?"

"I rather think Miss Maxwell is not very well," said Apperton.

"Harassed—worried, poor thing," said Moss,—"thinks too much of days that are gone. Has she been out of the room long?"

"Not very long," said Apperton.

"I say," said Moss, "have you been talking

some of your love nonsense to her, and so driven her away ?"

Apperton would with pleasure have exterminated him on the spot.

"Not a fair question, Doctor," said the Major—"love is not a subject to talk about; not that there is any such thing as love in England; climate too damp—dismal—dark—foggy—wretched—consumptive—agueish—dull—cold—cheerless. Italy, land of song—there sky bright blue—all genial—stars sparkling—moon like silver—bright—splendid. Jove—wonderful—delightful; and the women—oh !"

"Ah, I dare say they are mighty fine creturs," said Moss; "but I am quite contented with the beautiful red and white of our own charming countrywomen."

"Red and white !" cried the Major, in a tone that reverberated through the room; "horrid—low—coarse—vulgar;—red—white! unnatural !—Brown—olive—black hair—eyes, jet—splendid—fine—exquisite—soft—delicious—wonderful !"

"Make my best compliments to Miss Maxwell," said Moss, to a servant who had answered the bell, "and ask her if she is likely

soon to be visible; and if I am to have any tea, or perish with thirst before she comes."

"I expect Maxwell back every minute," said Apperton.

"I hope he will come soon," said the Major, "for I must go to the Opera. Ned is there to-night — Medea — Jove — grand —wonderful—magnificent—splendid—bold —fine—majestic!"

"Trash—gammon," said Moss; "I'm like Mungo in the play—'What good me hear me no undertand.'"

"The music you can comprehend, Mr. Moss," cried the Major—"the universal language of the soul. Oh, Jove! is it not fine—wonderful—splendid!"

"I like to be pleased, better than astonished," said Moss.

"And for *my* part, Moss," said Apperton, "you are so deucedly fastidious, that I should be very much astonished if you ever *were* pleased."

"Well said, Stockbroker," cried Godfrey; "that wouldn't be bad in the alley, or in that civilized club of yours, where, if a stranger gets in by accident, you cut off his tail, or stick his wig full of pens till he looks like a porcupine."

"Pens!" said the Major, shuddering, "horrid

—coarse—low—vulgar—detestable—shocking! Jove—terrible!"

In the midst of these exclamations Maxwell arrived, and led in his daughter, who appeared unable to stand alone, and seemed as if she could sooner have died than look at Apperton. "What, back from the club so soon?" said Maxwell, "I didn't expect you much before supper time."

"Yes, Mack," said Moss; "the Major is of the new no-wine school; he is going to the Opera, and I had no means of getting home unless he gave me a lift; so, as I knew my child here, wouldn't mind giving me some tea, here I am, and happier here than any where else."

Maxwell took Apperton aside and led him into the unlighted drawing-room, and Moss began, according to custom, to play with what he was pleased to call his Kittum's paws—meaning thereby the delicate hands of Miss Maxwell; but the eyes of the poor girl followed the object of her thoughts. She was conscious that her father was congratulating Apperton upon the successful issue of his suit; for as she stood committed, she had told the whole history of their conversation to Maxwell the moment he returned, had repeated all that passed, and

owned herself pledged and plighted to his favourite suitor.

Never were two people more perfectly *de trop* than Mr. Godfrey Moss and Major Overall at this moment; nor could they very well avoid perceiving it. Moss, who was as quick as lightning, and discovered great truths from small events, while Kate had crossed the room for her handkerchief, which lay on an opposite sofa, whispered to the Major, "The ice is broken—I'd lay my life the stockbroker has popp'd—"

"Curious!" exclaimed the Major. "Strange—eh—wonderful!"

"I say, Kate," said Godfrey to Miss Maxwell, in a whisper, "I say, d'ye mean to have him?"

"I don't know what you mean," said she, with a face perfectly crimson.

"You *do* though," said Moss, taking a huge pinch of snuff. "Well, my girl, I hope you'll be happy if you do have him—I don't see why you should not, but still—"

"Pray be quiet," said Kate, in a state to which nobody but a privileged man of the first class would have ventured to bring her—"I must leave the room if you go on."

"What! and give me no tea?" said Moss.

"The servants will give you tea."

"Thank you," said Moss; "no—no—my privilege here is that *you* make it for me, and give it me with those snowy hands, else would I not touch it."

"Upon my honour I must run away," said the Major. "Will you forgive me, Miss Maxwell? Jove—nothing but a positive engagement could draw me hence—I call this the paragon of English houses—charming, agreeable, delightful, sociable. May I call to-morrow to give you a description of the evening?—Your brother is to be with us—we are to meet—charming fellow, Ned Maxwell—excellent—good—capital—agreeable—elegant—clever—delightful—splendid. Adieu—good night. Mr. Moss, good night. I won't interrupt the *tête-à-tête* in the next room—horrid business—terrible—dreadful—distracting—infernal—Jove—adieu. I can find my way—good night—good night."

Saying, or rather squeaking which, the Major took his departure, and by so much was Kate relieved; for although for once she would rather have been without her ancient ally, Mousetrap, still his presence was not so irksome upon the present occasion as that of the Major, whose

views and pretensions were as clear to Moss as noon day, and whose violent affection for Ned Maxwell, he perfectly well knew, had its origin in a desire to detach him from the scheme of marrying the rich and ricketty Miss Epsworth, upon whose fortune the Major himself had a most subtle design.

His departure was the signal for Maxwell's return to the front room, accompanied by Apperton; nor had they long been there, before the natural feelings of the younger couple, and the great gratification of Maxwell himself at the result of the affair, began to develope themselves; and after a certain degree of blushing and laughing, and something like weeping, Moss was let into the secret: and having wished the *young* folks all sorts of happiness, in his odd and whimsical way, he and Maxwell retired to one corner of the drawing-room to play a quiet game of chess, leaving Kitty and her husband elect, to descant in a *tête-à-tête*, in another corner, on the delights of rational love, and the prospects of happiness afforded by an union so agreeable to all parties, where the affection by which they were inspired possessed none of the fierceness of ill judged passion, but was founded upon esteem and friendship, and a long, close, and unprejudiced observance of each other's conduct, manners, ac-

complishments and qualifications ; a dissertation which ended in the mutual declaration of the parties, that no two people in the whole world were so happy as they.

The wonted arrangements for supper (a meal continued in Maxwell's house from the sociable times of his youth) put an end to the dialogue, at about the same period at which the chess party had concluded their warfare ; the conversation became more general, Maxwell was in good spirits, Moss good humoured, and all went extremely well until the party broke up, each full of the thoughts of what had occurred. Apperton, delighted at his success, seemed to tread on air as he returned to the City ; Maxwell kissed and blessed his daughter with fervour and enthusiasm ; Moss muttered, " It will come to no good," loud enough to be heard, before he was well out of the hall; and Kate lay awake until near five o'clock in the morning, about which time she fell asleep, and dreamed that her first and only love had just returned to England with a large fortune.

CHAPTER III.

——Oh! I will keep this secret.
No racks, no shame shall ever force it from me.
DRYDEN.

THE reader has by this time become in some measure intimate with the domestic concerns of a family in the middling class of society; that class in which, more generally than in a higher sphere, true happiness is to be found. Whether Mr. Moss, whose inauspicious augury might have been overheard by Maxwell's servants as he departed (and most probably was) was justly prophetic or not, time only must determine. It will be my duty to trace the progress of the plighted pair through the paths of matrimonial life. In the meantime, and before the important ceremony

is performed, which is to unite them eternally, let us for a moment glance at the prospects and pursuits of the volatile Ned, of whom, at present, my reader knows but little.

With regard to the choice of a profession for him, Moss was perfectly right, and Maxwell certainly wrong. He had not one qualification for the bar; for besides not being poor, he had neither patience nor perseverance, nor a disposition to drudge and turmoil, and copy conveyances till his fingers ached, in the society of young men whose tastes were congenial to their pursuits, and whom he voted bores and asses, because they were seriously intent upon their future success in their professional career.

It was an ungracious task for Diveandpore, under whom he was placed, to repeat his feelings and apprehensions on the subject to the elder Maxwell; but when he acceded to his son's constant absence from chambers in the evenings, the compliance with his father's desire upon the point was couched in language, which, to a less fond and prejudiced parent, would have plainly betrayed the conviction of the lawyer, that as far as ultimate results were to be regarded, it mattered very little whether he attended in the evenings, or even in the mornings.

As it must therefore seem pretty evident to the reader that Ned Maxwell was not likely ever to grace the bench, even if he were called to the bar, it may be as well to inform the same patient personage, that Ned, even before the period to which we now particularly refer, had determined in his own mind, never to marry Miss Epsworth. He knowing, or rather being assured of his father's opulence, by his crony, the stockbroker, naturally argued with himself thus: why should I marry one of Byron's "dumpy women," for the sake of money, when I have money enough of my own—why sacrifice my youth and happiness to the filthy lucre of gain?—and as for disappointing *her*, there's Major Overall ready to jump—aye, down her throat, if she would but smile engagingly enough to give him the opportunity, and ready to carry her off to Florence, and diet her upon macaroni and salad, in marble saloons, to the utter annihilation of all her English ideas and feelings;—and, under the circumstances, and at *his* age, Ned Maxwell was right.

It seems to me moreover in some degree necessary, that I should still further initiate the reader into the *arcana* of the Maxwell establishment, and point out what may appear at first

sight, some of the *désagrémens* of the professional life which I have endeavoured so much to extol, and so anxiously to advocate.

At certain seasons Mr. Maxwell was in the habit of delivering lectures, in a room called the theatre, at the back of his house; which lectures, aided by a demonstrator, selected from amongst the ablest practical men in the profession, were carried on, not without illustrations afforded by the dissection of sundry bodies, procured for the purpose, and housed in the "stilly night," in a receptacle contrived for the purpose; to which an entrance from a dark and retired mews was secured, through which secluded portal, not only the dead subjects for consideration, but the living tyros for whose improvement they were furnished, made their "entries and their exits." During this particular period of the year, Maxwell himself was more nervous and irritable than at any other; his feelings seemed in a constant whirl; and his mind, divided between the anxiety for research and information, and the constant apprehension of having his house pulled down by an ignorant rabble, was in a perpetual ferment. "Lecture time," in fact, was a season of dread and disagreeables to all the members of the family; and Moss, who

never was over delicate in his observations, used to speak of it in terms which, as they were not particularly pleasant to those who *heard* them used, shall not offend the eyes of my readers.

It is here also absolutely necessary to state, (however uncomfortable the admission of the fact may render the more sensitive portion of the public) that in the pursuit of his studies, or rather for the advantage of those who studied under him, Maxwell had, like all his brethren, a sort of tacit understanding with a race of men, whose calling, however useful it may be, is held in utter abhorrence by the world, and who were in the habit of furnishing the aforesaid subjects for his dissecting-room. With these nocturnal caterers for scientific knowledge, Maxwell had occasionally confidential communications, which were not unfrequently held when his family thought, or chose to think, that he was poring over books, or examining "preparations;" and it was upon *him*—at least he always said so—that the two sharpers who bargained for half-a-crown to remove a drunken man from a neighbouring ale-house, played their shameful trick.

They agreed with a certain landlady who could by no means rid her house of an intoxicated guest, to carry him home, if she would

reward their labours with half-a-crown: a proposition to which the helpless widow most readily assented. A sack was procured, into which they thrust the unconscious convivialist, and conveyed him to the door of Maxwell's surgery; where, late as it was, Maxwell himself was *studying*. A knock announced the arrival of the rogues—the professor, anticipating the cause of the summons, opened the door.

"Subject?"—

"Yes—Male."—

"Price?"—

"Eight guineas."

"Agreed—bring him in," said Maxwell, "and I will fetch the money."

The surgeon proceeded to count out his cash, and having caused the sack and its contents to be placed withinside a room on the right hand of the passage, discharged his debt, fastened the door, and proceeded to untie the bag which contained his newly acquired treasure, when a voice from within exclaimed, "I say, come, none of your nonsense—what are you at?"

In an instant, Maxwell saw how he had been treated, and opening the door, called lustily after the two fellows, who had nearly reached the end of the mews. Determined not to be easily beaten,

he pursued, and nearly came up with them, when they called a halt, and made shew of battle.

"What d'ye want with us, Sir?" said one of the fellows, conscious that during the prevalent popular excitement upon the question, no surgeon in Maxwell's circumstances dare appeal to the police—"what d'ye want with us?"

"Why," said Maxwell, breathless with rage and running, "you villains, that's no subject I've bought of you."

"'Tis a subject, though," said the other; "it's a man, and a deucedly queer subject too."

"Yes," said Maxwell, "it is a man, but he's alive!"

"Alive!" said the other—"is he?—why then as you are a doctor, Sir, you may kill him when you want him."

With which pointed reply they again took to their heels, and were out of sight in a minute.

After this shameful imposition, which, contrary to the respectable evidence of Mr. Joseph Miller, Maxwell used gravely and positively to declare had been actually practised upon himself, he became more than ever cautious in his proceedings; and about the period so much dreaded in his family—"lecture-time,"— was wont to pay more frequent visits to the recep-

tacle for subjects, than he had been formerly in the habit of making.

It may be, therefore, easily imagined, that however anxious he might be for the conclusion of the affair between Kate and Apperton, and however evident it must be that they had no occasion to postpone the ceremony, in order to afford time for maturing the charms of the bride, or increasing the steadiness and experience of the bridegroom; still the lecture-season would be a very uncomfortable period at which to fix the "nuptial celebration." *That*, over, Maxwell thought he might indulge himself with a little relaxation, and after dispatching the happy couple to some rural seclusion for the enjoyment of the honeymoon, join them, with his friend Moss, at one of the nearest watering-places, where, in the society of his happy children, and the enjoyment of fresh air and wholesome exercise, he might lay in a stock of comfort for his life, and at all events a stock of health adequate to the expenditure of the coming season, the greatest part of which was to be spent in the apartments of the sick and in the society of the suffering.

Moss, who had a great turn for nauticals, and moreover a strong affection for shrimps and

lobsters, (the shelly-creturs, as he used to call them,) joined in this arrangement with high delight, and anticipated what he styled a "sniff of the briny," with evident pleasure.

To Kate the lecture-season, at all times disagreeable, now appeared perfectly odious; and the occasional introduction to her father's table of select specimens of pale-faced pupils, who were invited in batches to dinner before the dissertations of the evening, became more than ever unpleasant, now that a new scene had opened to her view, and that she felt it her duty—to say no more—to devote her thoughts and attention to her intended husband, whose assiduous manner and unremitting solicitude for her happiness and comfort, (after *his* fashion) excited the greatest satisfaction on the part of Maxwell, and obtained him occasionally a good word from the grumbling Godfrey Moss.

With all his care and all his kindness, however, it must be admitted that after Kate had opened her heart to receive his love, with a perhaps somewhat unreasonable expectation of something like ardour and enthusiasm, she anticipated a perpetuity of disappointment in the worldliness of his ideas, the limited expanse of his mind, and a too frequent recurrence to

self, and what is called prudence, to suit even *her*—for the best regulated female mind is tinctured with an enthusiasm wholly unknown to calculating man. Woman theorizes on the world and its ways, and feels that she could sacrifice anything, everything for the object of her affection. Man,—particularly such a man as Apperton—looks at both sides of the question, or, as *he* would have said, examines the debit and credit side of the account. This particular man, Apperton, had not the slightest touch of romance in his whole character; and if he ever had a predisposition to such an amiable weakness, his growing prudence, and the constant ridicule exercised by Moss upon anything like sentiment or feeling, had completely obliterated every spark and scintillation of it from his mind.

"Where shall it be then?" said Katherine; "you have only to fix, and I shall be happy to accede to your proposition."

"No, by no means," replied the lover; "*you* must decide and *I* shall obey."

This was with reference to the watering-place to which they were to retire to pass the honey-moon—since watering-place, by the influence of Moss, Maxwell had announced it to be.

"What say you to Hastings?" said Miss Maxwell.

"Hastings?" said Apperton, snarlingly.

"The country about it," said Kate, "is pretty, the situation sheltered to suit my father; there are many agreeable objects in the neighbourhood, and the spot itself is historically interesting."

"So it is," said Apperton, "and I dare say it is a nice place enough; but they gave some friends of mine, last year, an infernal bad dinner at an inn there—thirteen shillings a bottle for claret—and the fish not over good."

"Well then," said Kate, "the Isle of Wight, —a perfect paradise?"

"Yes, the pictures I have seen of *that*, are very pretty," said Apperton; "but then there's all the trouble of the sea, and additional expense and uncertainty."

"Well then, Brighton?" said the nymph.

"Why, yes, Brighton, I think, is best," replied the swain. "It's nearest to town."

"Not so secluded as it might be," sighed the bride elect.

"Not quite secluded," said Apperton, "but sufficiently so. If you like retirement, any of the small streets away from the sea, would

answer; and the rents, I suppose, are much lower in those parts of the town, than on the cliffs."

"Ah!" sighed Kate again.

"They tell me the beef isn't good at Brighton," continued the stockbroker; "but I dare say we shall be very happy: the mutton, my friend Hopkins says, is famous, and fish I know is uncommon cheap; and besides there are stages to town almost every hour, so that one can run up to business when it gets dull."

There was no romance in this—hardly enough of pleasurable anticipation to make Apperton's objections interesting—however, whenever he came out with his matter-of-fact prosing, poor Katherine sighed, and thought of ———, but I have promised not to say whom.

"Amoret and Phillida," cried Moss, from the front drawing-room; "come, come, tea-time, tea-time; surely you have had enough of your honey stuff and twaddle. Ring the bell, Stockbroker, let's have up the toast, and the twanky: you have plenty of time for cooing when I am not here—I like none of your turtle work, unless with plenty of green fat."

"We must go," said Kate, "or my dear Mousetrap will be angry."

"Where's your father, Kittums?" said Moss, "pottering about in the surgery, I suppose? Well—if I had his money—his nibble, as I call it—I'd leave the dead creturs in their graves."

"Science requires the exertions of scientific men," said Apperton: "no man could mend a clock, if he did not know how it was made—he must look at the works before he can regulate the machinery."

"Mighty good," said Moss; "but the simile won't hold; you can't work it out. If I were you, I'd never attempt to be figurative except in 'Change Alley."

"Mr. Moss," said Miss Maxwell, "let us consult *you* about our retreat."

"What retreat?" said Moss.

"Why after our marriage," said Apperton.

"Ugh," said Moss, thrusting half a handfull of snuff into his already curled up nostrils; "your retreat! there's no retreating after marriage."

"Now don't be cross," said Katherine, who saw that Moss was about to exhibit, in plainer terms than she thought would be agreeable to Apperton, his real sentiments upon their union, "you know what we mean—where shall we go to?"

" Oh, to spend the honeymoon !" said Moss. " Into solitude, with four horses and two postilions, a man servant, and a woman servant, all covered with white ribbons, by way of privacy,—'gad, I don't know—thank my stars, I never tried that scheme of happiness."

" We were thinking of Brighton," said Apperton.

" By way of seclusion !" said Moss. " Well, Brighton will be as good a residence as any other; there's nobody there knows much of either of *you ;* and the place has got so big, that you may be as snug as you please : a large town and a large party, are the best possible shelters for love matters. Aye, go to Brighton—the prawns for breakfast, the Wheatears (as the cocknies delicately call them, without knowing what they are talking about) for dinner, and the lobsters for supper, with a cigar, and a little ginnums and water, whiffing the wind, and sniffing the briny out of one of the bow-window balconies—that's it—Brighton's the place, against the world."

" Well then, Brighton let it be," said Apperton ; " and you, who seem to know all the advantages of the place, shall be appointed caterer. For as to trusting to servants in a

place like *that*, I declare I would as lief be hanged."

"Hanged, would you," said Moss; "what like the respectable merchant who suffered, as they call it, for murder this morning?"

"Oh, my dear Mr. Moss," cried Katherine, "don't talk of that."

"Talk of it, why there's nothing else talked of, that I hear," said Moss; "a gentleman criminal is too rich a treat to be overlooked; and a murder in good society forms a tale of middling life, much too interesting to be passed over in a hurry."

"Ah!" said Apperton, "I knew Hanningham well; and certainly I should have said he was the last man likely to commit such an act—but there's no trusting to appearances."

"True, Stockbroker," said Moss, "I never *do* trust to them, though others do." And here he cast one of those eloquent glances across the table at Kate, in which he was accustomed silently to express his unconquerable dislike of her betrothed.

Just at the time when this conversation took place, the feelings of the public had been greatly shocked, and their interest deeply excited, by the commission and expiation of one of those great

crimes, which every now and then agitate society. A merchant of eminence had, in a fit of passion, it was supposed, but never exactly known, from the nature of the evidence, shot his partner dead. The case against him was so plain and clear, that his previous high character, and the respectability of the station which he filled in the world, made no impression upon the jury; the judge with every disposition to be lenient, saw no probability of staying the strong arm of the law, and the unhappy victim of irritation, had suffered its last penalty on the morning of the day to the evening of which we are now referring. He had been executed at Horsemonger-lane prison, on the scaffold where Despard and his associates paid the forfeit of their mercenary treason, and where a treacherous friend had before yielded up his life for a murder not very dissimilar from that which had that morning been expiated.

The day had been congenial to the dreadful consummation of the law—heavy and incessant rain had deluged the town; and the curiosity of the people had been so far cooled by the weather, that a much smaller concourse of spectators than was expected, had assembled to witness the execution, which was with great difficulty got

through; the incidental ceremonies were much abridged, and in short, it seemed as if nature—or that which is called by the thoughtless, nature—had borne testimony to the guilt of the culprit, and thus awfully confirmed the justice of the sentence, which had doomed the wretched criminal to an ignominious death.

Yet such is human fallibility, that the very magnitude of his crime had rendered the murderer an object of interest; particularly amongst the better classes of society; and even the tenderest hearted of the tender sex were not wanting in excuses and palliation—"His partner must have been a villain to have provoked him"—"Hanningham was such a pleasant, amiable man"—"so popular"—"they did not believe he could be guilty"—"he never could be hanged"—"he would destroy himself in prison"—"he must be reprieved"—"his sentence would be commuted." And then they read, with the deepest attention, that the prisoner, at the trial, was dressed in black; that he occasionally conferred with his counsel, and several times during the summing up of the jury, was observed to apply a white handkerchief to his forehead; nay, in his own mercantile circle, bets were offered, first as to his acquittal, then as to his pardon, and wagers of hats (a sporting *medium*

in the civic world) were freely laid on either side; while in the stock-exchange, policies were actually opened to pay so much, to secure so much more, if he were actually executed.

It is extraordinary, but not more strange than true, that such a sensation should be excited when gentlemen suffer; but so it is; and certainly of all the culprits of middling life, who have publicly exhibited themselves on the last stage of existence, Hanningham, the London merchant, created, or seemed at the time to create, the most powerful effect upon society.

"Well then, we are decided for Brighton," said Katherine.

"And a good decision too," said Moss; "Tunbridge Wells is like Cranbourn Alley carried to Clapham Common; Bognor, with its pebble-stone rocks, dulness below misery; Hastings, a row of houses in a five's-court; Worthing, a bad imitation of its neighbour; Bath, a tea-kettle, always boiling and steaming; and Cheltenham a cockney edition of Hammersmith;—no, no, Brighton for ever. But pray, Kittums, when is the ceremony to take place?"

Kate blushed to the eyes—Apperton seemed to expect *her* to make a reply—she wished to hear what the lover would say to account for a

delay, which, after the enthusiastic reception of his offer by her father, seemed to her rather unaccountable.

"Why," said the tender swain, looking at his beloved, "I want to manage it, so as to get over next settling day."

"What!" cried Moss, "no chance of waddling?"

"Nonsense," said Kate, "what do you mean?"

"Oh! *he* knows," said Moss; "the wind-up is sometimes serious."

"Business sometimes presses," said the stockbroker, "and I should like to get rid of all my work before I left town, which, at any time is rather inconvenient to me, but particularly this season."

Poor Kate! every word her accepted lover uttered, sounded disappointment in her ears; for though, as I have already shown, she expected none of that buoyant, unearthly feeling which fills young hearts and ardent minds, in her union with Apperton, still she—*even* she—*did* think that he kept his anticipations somewhat too near the earth. However, he was a man of business; and it was all for the best; and romance in the City, or sentiment in the Alley, would be thrown

away; and so she went on "never minding" it, until she began to settle down into complacent discussions of matters-of-fact, and an assiduous calculation of expenses and consequences, for which, be it understood, the character of her past life had not ill prepared her.

There were moments, however, when the present, compared with the past, seemed like one sad blank. Katherine, on the eve of marriage, looked to her father's death as the greatest calamity that could befal her; for though she gave herself to Apperton, her love, her hope, her reliance, were in her parent; and this decided affection was another proof, if more were wanting, of the absence of that ardour which is the orthodox concomitant of mutual passion.

In the midst of these speculations as to their retreat for the honeymoon, the contrivers were disturbed by the arrival of Maxwell himself. He entered the room hastily and with trepidation—he looked pale—flurried—the tremor of his hand was discernible by the motion it imparted to a candlestick which he held—he looked wildly about him—seemed alarmed, and even disappointed, at finding his usual guests in their ordinary places in the drawing-room.

"My dear father," said Kate, "what on earth has happened?"

"Happened, child!" said Maxwell, "nothing has happened—what should happen?"

"Your looks, Sir," continued his daughter—

"———are not to be regarded," interrupted Maxwell.

"Have you seen the ghost of a patient, Mack?" said Moss. "What a lucky thing for the faculty it is, that dead men tell no tales."

"Give me some tea, Kate," said the surgeon, first putting down, and then putting out the light; "I have a very bad head-ache."

"You had better go to bed," said Moss; "a snooze in the early part of the evening is a capital remedy."

"No," said Maxwell; "I have to visit a patient late to-night."

"To-night, Sir?" said Apperton.

"Yes," said Maxwell, "it is a pressing case."

"Oh! one of your life or death boys, I suppose," said Moss. "What can't the cretur keep his leg on, till the morning?"

"It will save him much torture and much misery, if he can be released to-night," said the surgeon.

"Oh!" said Moss, "he'll be released soon

enough, no fear of that. Come, stockbroker, a pinch of your snuff."

"Have you ordered the carriage, Sir?" said Katherine.

"No, my dear child," said Maxwell, "I have had the horses out a great deal to-day—I can walk; the night is fine, and the air will do me good. I am to meet another medical man at twelve."

"At twelve—what, midnight!" said Moss —"walk out at midnight!—why your myrmidons will turn the tables upon you, murder you, and send you to your own shop to be cut up."

"No fear of that," said Maxwell; "at least no fear that will hinder me from doing my duty to a fellow creature."

"The weather has cleared up wonderfully since morning," said Apperton; "the morning was so dreadfully wet that they had a difficulty in finishing the law upon that amiable gentleman, Hanningham."

A deep groan resounded through the room—every eye turned towards Maxwell—it was from his lips the sound had escaped. "I believe," said he, "that Hanningham was innocent, after all."

"Impossible, Sir," said Apperton; "the

proofs were clear as light against him ; besides, I heard that he confessed the whole affair last night."

"That I doubt," said Maxwell, "and this I *know*, that those who are best acquainted with him and knew him most intimately, are even now assured that he was not guilty of the murder."

"That's rather a late discovery," said Moss ; "the man's hanged, and now they find out he is innocent. Some more tea, Kittums, dear."

"The glorious uncertainty of the law," said Apperton.

"Rather the inglorious certainty," said Moss, "as far as regards Mr. Hanningham."

"Are you going far, my dear father?" asked Katherine.

"Not very far, my dear child," replied Maxwell.

"And so late?"

"Yes," said the surgeon, "so late—it sounds quite mysterious, doesn't it?"

"I'll walk with you, Sir," said the son-in-law elect.

"Or have a hackney coach, Maxwell," said Moss, "and then you can set me down. Are you going my way?"

"No," said Maxwell.

"Nor mine, Sir?" said Apperton.

"No, I must go alone," said Maxwell.

"Oh! I see," whispered Moss to the stock-broker; "some delicate affair—secrecy—mum—a lady of quality in distress."

"Not so, Moss," answered his friend; "so far I can safely assure you: but our profession has a privilege which I am sure your good sense will not permit you to try to violate—we have a confidence reposed in us, and we should deserve to lose it, if we once could betray those who trust us."

At this moment, a sudden and violent noise, as of some heavy object falling, seemed to shake the house.

"Mercy on us!" said Katherine; "what is that?"

"What is it?" said Moss.

"Nothing—nothing," said Maxwell; "something has fallen down in the room above."

"It must be in *your* bed-room, Sir," said Katherine—"I'll run up, and see what it is."

"Not for the world, Kate!" cried her father, springing on his feet; and rushing across the room, he seized the candle which the young lady was on the point of lighting, preparatory to

starting upon her voyage of discovery. "No, no; give *me* the light—I can go, child—it is nothing—a book, or a chair, or, perhaps, the servants—here, here—I'll go myself and see what it is, since you all seem so mightily alarmed."

Saying which, the agitated master of the mansion, concealing as well as he could, the feelings which nearly overpowered him, quitted the apartment.

"Something's wrong with that cretur," said Moss. "Go up, Kittums, and see after him; I'm sure all is not as it should be."

"What can be the matter?" said his daughter.

"Oh, nothing is the matter," said Apperton. "Mr. Maxwell is always anxious and nervous when he has any difficult case on his mind, and gets fidgetty and irritable—"

"But where *can* he be going so late?" said Katherine, "so unusually late, and on foot?"

"Why he has told you that he won't tell you," said Moss, "and so there's no use worrying yourself about it; he is neither going my way, westward, nor Apperton's way, eastward;—now as he is rather too old and too steady to go northward, I conclude he is going southward. But

it is getting late, and our staying here will not get us a bit nearer the secret, so let's have the cold meat, Kittums, and the pickles, and the punch. I have had nothing since dinner, except my tea, and that, as the French Count says, is but wishy-washy stuff after all."

"Shall I go up to my father?" said Kate.

"Yes, if I were you, I would," said Apperton, "he may be unwell."

"Ring the bell, Mr. Moss," said she,—"order the supper, and I will be back directly."

Saying which, she proceeded upstairs to her father's bed-chamber, and hearing a deep groan proceeding from within, rushed into the apartment. As her eyes met the objects it contained, a faint scream escaped her,—in an instant her father seized her hand, and led her from the room. He closed the door after him—without speaking he drew his daughter towards her dressing-room—they entered it—she, trembling with alarm and apprehension, held by the sofa to sustain herself.

"Katherine," said Maxwell, "what induced you to burst into my room after I had told you that I would myself ascertain the cause of the noise we heard,—was it curiosity?"

"No, no, my beloved father," said Miss

Maxwell, "I was prompted by anxiety for you: we saw you were agitated."

"Who saw that?" said Maxwell.

"All of us," said Katherine.

"What, while I was in the drawing-room?" asked Maxwell.

"Yes."

"Well, never mind," said Maxwell, "you did not suspect the cause?"

"What cause?" said Kate.

"In short, you have *no* suspicions—you *know* nothing—you have heard nothing?"

"No, my beloved father," said the agitated girl. "I followed you to your room, fearing that you were unwell—when I reached the door I heard a groan——

"—It was not *I* who groaned," said Maxwell. "Tell me,—again I ask,—you *know* nothing?"

"No, no," said Kate, "I know nothing—I wish to hear nothing respecting the——"

"Hush! not a word," said Maxwell, "hear a father's solemn injunction—the ruin of one individual, the life of another, depend upon your silence—your immutable silence as to what you have just seen,—you *know* nothing,—say nothing. The day may come when you will know all. Now, mark me, child—by your own precipitancy,

founded as I firmly believe on affection for your father, you have brought this restriction upon yourself. Let us return to the drawing-room,—let us assume an air of composure; but let us get quit of our friends as early as possible —before midnight it *must* be."

"But really," said Katherine, "what have I seen to agitate you so deeply,—surely you are at liberty in your own house to—"

"—Not a word, not a syllable," again interrupted Maxwell. "Kate, dearest girl, you love me, fondly love me?"

"Need I answer such a question?" said Kate, hiding her weeping eyes on her father's shoulder.

"Show that love for me, then," said Maxwell, "by never alluding to the events of the last half hour,—not only not to others, but never mention them to *me;* and never, never seek to gain an explanation of what you have witnessed,—promise me *that.*"

"Most solemnly I promise it," said Kate.

"The blessing of Heaven be upon you!" said her father,—"come, come, come."

Saying which, he drew her arm under his, and taking up the light, descended with his beloved child to the drawing-room, where the

servant was laying the cloth for the accustomed supper, and Godfrey Moss was poising some oysters, previously to inserting them between the bars of the grate, a process of roasting such fish, in which he was an adept, and of his dexterity in which, the worthy gentleman was particularly proud.

CHAPTER IV.

She has charmed thee like a syren,
With looks of love, and with enchanting sounds;
Too late the rocks and quicksands will appear,
When thou art wrecked upon the faithless shore
By following her delusion.

ROWE.

To the evening I have just described, or at least part of it, a night and morning of intense interest and anxiety to the house of Maxwell succeeded. Moss, having imbibed a sufficient quantity of the "ginnums and water," as he called it, produced his cigar and lighted it, and betook himself to his hotel. Apperton, (having taken a private leave of his betrothed in the back drawing-room, where he went to look for something which he

had not left there, and whither she followed him, to assist in a pursuit which she knew went for nothing,) bent his way to the city; and Maxwell having seen his daughter safely to her chamber, desired the servants to retire to rest, as he was obliged to go out late, and would take one of those portable keys which *bon vivants*, and occasionally the professional members of middling life, find to be most admirable inventions for superseding the sitting-up of domestics.

After, therefore, the household of the surgeon had departed to their repose, and just as he imagined them wrapt in slumbers sweet and sound, the head of the family went forth into the wide world on the mission to which he had only slightly referred; but, whether it was of the delicate nature that Moss anticipated, or of the critical character which Apperton apprehended, it was not destined that his own establishment should know. His son had left town on a visit to the family of his intended, Miss Epsworth, accompanied by Major Overall, so that Katherine was left alone of the family to ruminate upon what she had seen, and on what she could scarcely fail to believe the consequent

nocturnal ramble of her esteemed father; and when at nine o'clock the following morning, Kate discovered that he had not returned home, her anxiety and distress may be better conceived than described.

Ten thousand fearful apprehensions filled her mind; Maxwell's agitation on the previous evening, his ardent desire to evade the inquiries, and get rid of the society of his intimate friends; his positive injunctions as to silence, added to his unprecedented absence from home without her knowledge of his destination, excited the greatest alarm in her anxious breast, and when Moss made his appearance at the breakfast-table, his observations upon the affair tended in no degree whatever to calm her agitation, or sooth her apprehensions.

Another hour elapsed, and still no Maxwell

"What can have happened?" said Moss; "didn't he tell you *anything*, Kittums?"

"Not of the nature of his excursion," said Kate.

"Did he go out after you were all gone to bed?"

Kate answered in the affirmative.

"Ten to one, then, some mischief has oc-

curred," said Moss. "Do the servants know nothing?—did nobody sit up for him?"

"No," said Kate, "he desired they might not—that he would let himself into the house on his return."

"Something's wrong, Kitty, I fear," said Moss, looking wistfully at the breakfast table.

"My dear Mr. Moss, don't terrify me to death," said Kate; "what *can* have happened?"

"Impossible to say," sighed Moss; "but it is very extraordinary so regular a person—habits like clockwork—unless a poor patient, and a difficult case, and then he'd stay for a fortnight if he were wanted,—perhaps it is *that*,—at all events, Kittums, let's have breakfast, he will have breakfasted before this, wherever he is, and there s no use in waiting any longer."

Saying which, Godfrey used his acknowledged privilege, and rang the bell. Kate's anxiety hardly permitted her to know what was going on, and every moment she was running to the window, every sound of a footstep, or the stopping of a carriage excited her interest, and attracted her attention.

"But, Kate, what did he say to *you*, when you went up stairs to him last, and when he seemed so flurried?" said Moss.

"Ah!" said Kate, "that's the point which worries me most."

"Did he seem vexed, or angry?" asked Moss.

"No," said Kate. "He made me promise not to mention a word of that interview—but if by my silence I am keeping him in some situation of peril—yet—what good *could* I do, even if I told all!"

"All what, Kittums?" said Moss, who had begun to prepare his first meal for the day, with a carefulness and precision indicative of a secondary feeling for his friend's safety—"there *is* a story, then, is there?—this toast isn't half brown enough—eh, Kittums?"

"There certainly *is*," said Miss Maxwell, "but how that can be connected with my father's prolonged absence, or how the circumstance of which I am aware, could have caused this delay in his return, I know not."

"Tell me what it is," said Moss; "the butter, Kittums—what is it?"

"I dare not," said Kate, "I have promised my father to keep secret what I saw, and—"

"But if he is suffering in consequence," said Moss, "that's a pretty joke—this egg is hardly done enough—eh?"

"How can he be suffering in consequence?" said Kate.

"How can I tell," said Moss, "unless you tell me what you saw—concealment is all trash—nonsense—you promised not to tell, because your father desired you to do so; now you think telling may be of use to *him*, why of course you tell."

"If I could be sure that my telling what I saw," said Kate, "could conduce to his speedy return, or even his safety abroad, you may be sure I would run the risk of disobeying *him*, for the sake of ensuring your advice in this emergency."

"Well, tell me, and let me judge," said Moss.

"I know not what to do," said Kate, her fears for her father's safety, and her anxiety for his preservation, acting vaguely and confusedly upon the force of the moral obligation to secresy into which she had entered the night before—"I think I *will* tell *you*, Doctor," said she, "it will be best—you can then judge what we ought to do—I went up stairs to my father last night—"

"Well, that I know," said Moss; "a little bit more sugar, Kittums, and a drop more cream—yes—you went up stairs to your father—"

"And when I entered my father's room—somewhat abruptly, I beheld —— Oh! there he is! there he is!" exclaimed she, recognising his accustomed knock at the street door; "thank God, he is safe and well." Saying which she rushed into the hall, and was in her father's arms in a moment, leaving Moss, with his mouth full, and his ears open, as uninformed as Curtis, when Grumio cut him short of the many things of worthy memory, which were doomed to die in oblivion, and he return unexperienced to his grave.

"Why, Mack—where have you been, old boy?" exclaimed Moss, as the surgeon entered the breakfast parlour.

"On business," said Maxwell; "you may rely upon it, for pleasure I should not willingly have staid so long from home."

"Ah, but we did not know you did stay willingly," said Moss. "Have you breakfasted?"

"No," said Maxwell.

"Then we must have up heaps more eatables, Kittums," said Moss. "I have finished the toast, and the butter, and the eggs. Well, and what have you been doing—putting some poor cretur out of his misery?"

"I hope so," said Maxwell.

"And what was you doing up stairs last night, when Kittums bounced in upon you?" said Moss.

In an instant Maxwell's countenance lost its placidity, his eyes glanced hastily and angrily on his daughter.

"Kate," said he, "have you told Moss what I bid you never mention?"

"Not she, Mack," said Moss, "but I'll be hanged if she would not, if you hadn't knocked at the door just as you did. If you had doddled him open with your little key, I should have had the whole story out before you had got in; but you were too much of a gentleman, I suppose, to let yourself in, by daylight."

"In my anxiety," said Kate, "to account for your absence, I think I should have been induced to violate my promise to *you*, Sir, in order to have consulted the Doctor as to what was best to be done; but—"

"Should have violated," said Maxwell, "did you violate it, Kate?"

"No, father," said Kate.

"That's a good girl," said Maxwell, resuming his former air of mildness and kindness;

" not that there is any thing to tell, that every body in the world might not know ; but as you promised me, I should have been vexed, and even angry, if you had broken that promise."

" Psha—trash—gammon," said Moss, " nobody wants to know your secrets—some back-stairs warming-pan plot, I suppose—some blot to be covered—some scrape to be hid ;—come, give me another cup of tea, I don't care a fig where you have been. I'm deuced glad you are come back safe and sound, for one can't get a bit of breakfast in comfort, when the tea makers are fidgetty."

" Come, Doctor," said Kate, " you do yourself an injustice, as you always do, in denying your own good feelings: you only pretended to care for your breakfast to divert my anxiety, and make light apparently of what I know worried you."

" No such thing, Miss," said Moss ; " I am like the Jolly Miller they sing about in the play, who lived on the river Dee, ' I care for nobody, nobody cares for me.' "

" There, Moss," said Maxwell, " you do *us* as great a piece of injustice as you did yourself before. However, I shall go up to my room and

lie down for an hour or two, for I am really tired."

"What, have you been up all night?" said Moss.

"Yes," said Maxwell, who seemed agitated and disturbed, even by the slightest reference to the events of the last twelve hours.

"Have you been far?" said Moss.

"A few miles."

"On foot?"

"Not exactly."

"Your boots are as muddy as if you had walked half over Lincolnshire," said Moss.

"Crossing the streets," replied the surgeon.

"What, clay in the streets?" said Moss.

"Never mind, Moss," said Maxwell. "I repeat what I have often said to you before—members of our profession are privileged; we are not expected to tell all we know."

"True," said Moss; "and it appears as if your family considered your privilege like that of the peerage—hereditary, for Kitty herself is as close as an oyster."

"And will remain so; of that I am quite sure," said Maxwell, "after her promise to me. Good morning, good folks, at luncheon we

shall meet. Ned will be home, by dinner time, from the country; Apperton will, of course, dine here; and I have asked two or three people to join us to make up a rubber."

"What! you don't repeat your nocturnal visit?" said Moss.

"Mousetrap! Mousetrap!" said Maxwell, "how often am I to tell you not to be inquisitive?"

"Now there goes that cretur," said Moss, as Maxwell left the room, "to get an hour or two's uncomfortable rest, after a sleepless night; devoted to some sick devil, pottering about in the mud and dirt, nobody knows where, all for a pound or two, when he has got already more than he knows what to do with."

"I don't think my dear father so very mercenary either," said Kate.

"Mercenary!" cried the Doctor, "everybody is mercenary; look into every thing—every pursuit, from the chimney-sweeper to the cabinet minister, and you'll find six and eight-pence at the bottom of all their doings. I have said this all along, and one of the scribbling creturs who knows me, put it into one of his books, and called me a cynic into the bargain."

"And I," said Kate——.

"——called me a Mousetrap, Kittums," interrupted Moss; "but then you were a little toddling thing; and then I was fond of babies, and—I don't like 'em now, they make me sick, and spoil conversation, and—but I forgot—I suppose you'll soon have some on 'em to pester me with. I hope to God they'll take after their mother."

This pointed allusion to Kate's approaching nuptials, and the unequivocal expression of dislike towards her intended husband which it conveyed, drove the blushing bride elect out of the breakfast parlour; leaving Mousetrap to spell the Morning Post, and read, as he did most sedulously, the hebdomadary which that popular paper presents on the Monday of each succeeding week, and by which a man, at a glance, can perceive the very day and hour at which the moon is in perigee; when the nightingale begins to sing; when the cuckoo proclaims the coming flowers; when Oxford and Cambridge terms commence; when snakes appear, and Joshua died. In the complicated lore of this useful compendium, Mousetrap was erudite beyond measure, and to the enjoyment of his study that way tending, we will leave him until the arrival of evening, and of the heir of the house of Maxwell, had

re-assembled the whole of the family party in Burlington Gardens.

Exercise, when recommended medicinally to a fat man—olives to a young beginner—truffles to a novice—an aquatic excursion to belles from the inland counties, are nothing compared with the feelings produceable by a continued effort to fancy oneself in love with some particular young lady, a marriage with whom, our friends and connexions have decided upon for us, and whose fortune and station in society would be so particularly advantageous; and it may safely be relied upon, that a positive antipathy may sooner be conquered, than a passion fanned up, out of such feelings as those which young Maxwell entertained for Miss Epsworth.

I would not describe Miss Epsworth for the world; for having proclaimed her, plain in person, and uneven in temper, if I descended to particulars, some of my suspicious female readers would not fail to put her cap upon their heads, and think it fitted uncommonly well. Suffice it to say, she was cold in manner, and unwholesome to look at—coarse in her tastes, and fine in her dress—her costume was regulated by the absurdities which appear every month in the magazines as records of fashions, being such

things as never are worn, or ever could be seen any where out of Bedlam ;—add to all her other defects, wayward pride and flippant conceit, founded upon her wealth, (the old six and eight-penny basis of our friend, Mousetrap,) and an openness to flattery so marvellous, and a credulity upon the point of her own attractions so incomprehensible, that even those who sought to win her, were fearful of alarming her suspicions, while they scarcely satisfied her expectations; put all these amiable qualities together, and we have something like a portrait of the intended wife of Mr. Maxwell, junior.

But certainly, if at any period of their acquaintance the young gentleman had felt a distaste for the young lady, it was, at the period to which we now refer, most considerably improved, not only by the events of the last few days during his *sejour* in the country, but by the occurrences of the last few hours in London; for it appeared that Ned, (whether from the effect of contrast, or from the integral beauties of the new object, it was difficult to determine,) had, since his arrival in town, lost at a *coup de main*, the stubborn heart which had so long resisted the advances of the wealthy Jane.

"Well, Master Ned," said Moss, beginning his

attack the moment the family party were ranged at dinner, "what did you do down at Dullham House—hard work to get through the day—eh?"

"No," said Ned; "I didn't find it very bad—after breakfast we did as we liked till half past one."

"Ah! that is, did nothing," said Moss;—"went and washed a dog in a pond; looked at a hen's nest; saw half a dozen horses' tails sticking out of their stalls in the stables; squashed about the brown sugar walks in the dripping shrubberies; sat on the bridge; looked at the water; saw how sticks swim; admired a calf; proposed sparrow shooting; no gun at hand; thought of a walk in the kitchen garden—gate locked; wanted to look at the grapery—gardener, gone to buy pea sticks. I know—well, poor deluded creturs, and what after *that*?"

"Why, after *that*," said Ned, "(if you mean after what never occurred) came luncheon; after luncheon our horses and the carriages were ordered—Miss Epsworth and her aunt used to drive in the phaeton, and I and Overall, and one or two others, used to ride."

"What have you done with the Major?" said Maxwell.

"He is there, Sir," said Edward.

"What, at Dullham?"

"Yes," said Ned.

"To be sure he is," said Moss.

"I think," said Apperton, "he has an eye to the freehold, and the copyhold, and the leasehold; the India stock, and the three per cent. consols."

"As sure as a gun," said Moss, "that lying little cretur will snap up your Jenny, Master Ned; he'll carry off your little ricketty vinegar bottle, if you don't look sharp."

"I cannot help it," said Edward; "and if he do, I don't much care."

"What!" exclaimed Kate, "a lover, and speak so of your beloved?"

"I am no lover, Kate," replied her brother; "at least not of her's."

"Hallo!" said his father, "what, is your heart going another way?"

"Going, Sir?" said Edward.

"Gone, I think," said Kitty.

"That is nonsense," said Edward; "but I honestly confess I never *did* see such a lovely creature in the whole course of my exist-

ence, as one I saw to-day, and whose life I saved."

"Oh! a romantic affair," said Moss. "Where did 'um happen, Master Neddums?"

"In—Long Acre,—"said Edward, after a little hesitation.

"What a scene for a romance!" said Kate.

"Was she very pretty, Ned?" asked his father,—"tell us your story."

"Why, Sir," said the son, "at the corner of Long Acre, a carriage driving furiously along, and, unseen by her, was within an inch of running over this beautiful girl. I, luckily, and most luckily, as I hadn't been in town half an hour, and was coming homewards from Lincoln's Inn, rushed between *her* and the horses, seized the bridle of the off horse with one hand, and catching the lovely creature round the waist with the other, succeeded in rescuing her from what must otherwise have been certain death."

"And a very meritorious act too, Ned," said Maxwell. "No accident *did* happen to her, I hope?"

"No job for the craft," said Moss; "no feeling for the faculty—eh?—six and eight-pence again, Kittums."

"No, Sir," said Edward, "she was, as they

say, more frightened than hurt; but she was all gratitude to me,—and called me her deliverer."

"Mistook you for your father, perhaps, Neddums," said Moss.

"She gave you her address—a reference, I conclude," said Apperton.

"No," said Edward, and sighed.

"He's a young chap yet," said Moss, *sotto voce* to the stockbroker; "does she live in Drury Lane, Ned?"

"Where she lives, I know not," said the young man. "I begged leave to see her home, but she strenuously declined; I inquired her residence—she would not tell me—she requested me to call a hackney-coach—I did so—handed her in—"

"And left her in the straw without further inquiry?" asked Moss.

"I *did* inquire again and again," said young Maxwell, "but to no purpose. She thanked me a thousand times: but entreated me, in accepting those thanks, to add to her obligations, by not endeavouring to discover whither she went; and I—"

"Of course got up behind the coach and traced her," said Moss.

"No, Mr. Moss," said Edward, "I did not. I gave her my honour I would conform myself to her wishes; she told me her reasons were important, and imperious —I believed her assertions, and obeyed her injunctions."

"And you behaved like a gentleman and a man of honour, Ned," said his father; "but was she very handsome?"

"Lovely, perfectly lovely," said Edward.

"I thought," said Kate, "that you did not prefer such lovely persons, Edward?"

"Perhaps, Kate," said Ned, "I should rather call it loveable. I have no taste for your regular, systematic, Grecian nosed, short lipped, classical one, two, three, regulation beauties, as you know; but this creature had eyes full of intelligence and feeling, and a mouth which when she smiled—"

"Oh! stuff, Ned!" said Moss, "here, stock-broker, give me some snuff. I used to talk that sort of trash when I was at your time of life, but—"

"Nay," said Maxwell, "when you did talk it, I have no doubt you thought it very agreeable."

"What added to the interest this charming girl inspired," said Ned, "was her dress."

"Cocquelot, hat and hair to match?" said Moss.

"No," said Edward, "she was dressed in the deepest mourning."

"Black saves washing," said Mr. Apperton.

"She had that within, which passeth shew," said Edward, "there was a plaintive melancholy in her eye—"

"Oh, Ned, Ned," said Moss, "if you go on so, I must have up the gin and water an hour earlier than usual."

"It is very curious," said the stockbroker, "to observe how the most sensible characters are imposed upon. There was myself—"

"——what, by way of an example," said Moss, taking a huge pinch of Apperton's snuff.

"Yes, *exempli gratia*—"

"——as the Dutch say," continued Mousetrap.

"Come, come, Mousetrap," said Maxwell, "let Apperton tell his story, and then we will have some loo—and Kitty shall say to you and Pam together, pray be civil."

"Oh, civil," said Moss, "I'm civil enough, but I've no patience with all this pottering about runaway horses and runover women—

pish!—the creturs put themselves there on purpose to be run over, or run away with. Come, Kittums—put away your netting—making a purse for the stockbroker boy,—eh?"

"I was making it for *you*," said Kate.

"Not a bit of it," said Moss,—"I hav'n't no need of purses—no—no—Apperton's the boy—those high-stool chaps, with the desks, and the rails, and the stove, and the slits in the panels for the bills, eh, Apperton? that's the way we does 'em in Copthall-court, or wherever your Potamaboo place is. Come along, then, let's see you play your loo."

"What, will you play?" said Maxwell.

"Not I," said Moss: "I can't understand that stationary work; but as we ar'n't to have any music, let's see you do the Great Mogul foolery."

And accordingly they sat down to what some of the party considered a relaxation from severer occupation; what others felt to be a simply hazardous investment of money on a small scale; what some endeavoured to find oblivion to their thoughts in the pursuit of; and what two juvenile appendages to the circle, in the shape of pale-faced pupils, considered as extremely amusing, rather improper, and very

exciting, seeing that they played five card loo, with fish at two shillings per dozen.

Neither the intricacy, nor the importance, nor the interest of the game, however, could recal the thoughts, or attract the attention of Edward Maxwell from the all absorbing object of his present contemplation. He had, indeed, seen a lovely creature, lovely in all personal attractions, and still more beautiful and pure in her mind. He had saved her life—her heart overflowed with gratitude for the courage and readiness which he had displayed in her rescue. Young Maxwell's person (and sad is the certainty to gentlemen of plain appearance, and ungainly figure, to know that personal attractions *have* their influence, especially on first acquaintance,) young Maxwell's person was extremely good, his countenance was intelligent and animated, and constantly affected by the workings of his mind. This, in addition to his unaffected, gentlemanlike manners, and the genuine ardour with which he first preserved the beautiful girl from destruction, and then followed up his activity in her rescue, by his solicitude for her tranquillity, and his assurances of obedience to her almost unreasonable refusal to give him any information of her

name or residence, had, I have reason to know —how, it is impossible to tell—produced their due effect upon the heart of the mourning fair one.

Edward, however, pledged, as he felt himself, not to pursue the bright vision which had flashed across him and so quickly faded away, held, that her injunctions only went to prevent his following her upon *that* occasion, and certainly could not refer to any future experiments which he might be inclined to make, in the way of falling in with her *accidentally*. The fact of her being alone, and in no very aristocratic part of the town, unattended by a servant, proved that in point of rank or fortune, *she* stood not much above himself: and the circumstance of her perambulating the streets one day in the week, so unattended, led him to the conclusion, that she might be caught wandering in a similar manner some other day. The best chance he seemed to have, would be to hover about the neighbourhood in which he had first encountered her; and although the crossing from Drury-Lane to Long-Acre, seems, as Miss Maxwell said, a somewhat unromantic haunt for the thoughts or the person of a sighing lover, still the breakfast of the following morn-

ing had scarcely disappeared, before the gentle Adonis, rejecting the retirement of Diveandpore's sunken study, might have been seen oscillating between the pastry-cook's in Queen-Street and the clothes' shop opposite.

There he wandered like a troubled spirit—gazing in all directions—lingering and looking; sometimes varying the dulness of his occupation by reading the declarations of the efficacy of Mr. Basil Burchell's wonderful Anodyne Necklaces, and examining the well-preserved results of Dr. Gardener's incomparable vermifuge, sadly divided between love and lassitude: until after a delay long past what he imagined might be the accustomed hour of his divinity's visit to those parts, he sauntered, with the sun in his eyes, towards the western quarter of London, still looking in every direction for the wished for object of his speculation.

But, alas! his hopes were vain, his pursuits fruitless! and when he returned to dress for dinner, jaded, tired, and vexed, he began to feel more seriously than ever, the violence of the passion with which the bright eyes of his incognita had inspired his young heart.

To the sedate, the serious, and the more ad-

vanced reader, this painful result of a momentary glance may appear somewhat overstrained. But no, at Edward's time of life, the effect was natural, the wound began to rankle, and to the first glow of fancy succeeded an aching desire again to behold the fair creature whose features were constantly before his eyes. Restlessness and vexation, even to tears, at his loss; self-reproach at the thoughtlessness which could have permitted her so entirely to escape him; and a something too like regret at the punctiliousness of his own honour, which had induced him to observe his promise with a strictness she herself might despise him for, all combined to worry, agitate, and torment the love-sick youth.

His passion had, in four-and-twenty hours, effected a complete revolution in his mind. His once loved home became irksome to him; he could not endure meeting his own family at dinner; the placid happiness of his sister and her lover distressed him; and as for Moss, he hated him and his satirical jokes with all the fervour of his heart;—in short, nothing could soothe, nothing could amuse, nothing could interest him, and he resolved to dine alone at

some distant coffee-house, and endeavour to divert his thoughts by varying the scene, while he still pursued the object of his hopes and wishes by perambulating in various directions the vast metropolis and its environs. The success attendant upon this determination remains to be developed.

CHAPTER V.

"She doth stray about by holy crosses."
SHAKSPEARE.

THE lectures were fast proceeding, but Edward still remained unsatisfied as to his transient beauty. He must, however, for a moment, be left playing bo-peep with his Long Acre Hebe, while the reader's attention is attracted to the measures in progress with respect to the marriage of the stockbroker and Katherine Maxwell.

The affair was now no longer a secret, no more was it mentioned in whispers, no more referred to in *inuendoes*, or hinted at in half murmured sentences. Milliners and mantua-makers had been called into council, bridesmaids had been nominated, their several and various merits dis-

cussed, and their eligibility canvassed. Nay, Apperton himself had gone the length of visiting the King Street Bazaar to select a second-hand carriage, (number 348.) yellow body, drab lining, (a little soiled,) with scarlet wheels, picked out black, wherein to carry off the idol of his soul, after the auspicious ceremony had been performed, which was to confer upon him the mastery of her hand, and—her fifteen thousand pounds, three per cent. consols.

Moss had a brother who partook considerably of the family failing—a strong affection for grog and cigars, and who was Rector of Fudley-cum-Pipes, in the county of Lincolnshire, an orthodox divine in his way, and perhaps more addicted to boosery, than he would have been in a less humid county than that which it was his fortune to inhabit. To *him* was to be intrusted the agreeable duty of uniting the philosophical lovers, or as Apperton called it, "establishing the firm;" and to *him* even had the writ of summons been issued; so that things were actually in extremities, and all the interested parties on the very tip-toe of expectation.

It had been at one time proposed that Edward's marriage with Miss Epsworth, should take place on the same day with that of his

sister. But however indifferent the elder couple might appear as to the consummation of all their earthly hopes and wishes, the youngest lover of the party seemed not only indifferent as to the time *when* he was to call the wealthy girl his own, but since the appearance of the sable vision in Drury Lane, almost positively opposed to the conclusion of the match at any period whatever; but as it turned out in the sequel, he was not doomed to languish for ever in despair on the subject of his beautiful *incognita.*

After a ten days' patrolling of London, just as he was crossing Piccadilly from the end of Half-Moon Street to the Green-Park Gate, his eye suddenly fell on the long desired, long looked for object. The lady at the same moment saw, and evidently recognised her anxious admirer, and instantly huddling down her veil, passed into the park, and greatly increased her rate of walking; but Edward borrowed the wings of Love, and in a few seconds was at her side.

"Have I found you at last?" said he; "this meeting repays me for all the anxiety I have suffered since we parted, and the unceasing search I have made to behold you again."

"It would be affectation in me," said the young lady, hesitatingly, and in broken accents, "to deny the recollection of my deliverer from danger; but the same motives which induced me to trust to your honour the last time I saw you, not to endeavour to trace my residence, compel me now to entreat you to leave me immediately."

"I have once sinned by obeying you," said Edward; "you were then suffering under agitation of mind and great alarm, and I myself was considerably flurried by the circumstances of your accident and escape. I *then* certainly made a promise, and I have kept it—but I made it only for that once."

"And how you have kept it," said the stranger, "I do not exactly understand, since you have just said that I have been the object of your unremitted search ever since."

"I confess," said Maxwell, "that I have never until this very moment ceased repenting my rash promise; and it is not very likely that I should again commit an error, which has already caused me so much pain and annoyance."

"I am sure, Sir," said the lovely girl, raising from the ground a pair of eyes full of ex-

pression and anxiety, "I am quite sure you would not wish to make me eternally miserable; and I will be candid enough to tell you, that your success in discovering my name and residence would be nothing short of destruction to me."

"What?" said Edward, "a cruel, tyrannical mother, or a savage maiden aunt? a vindictive father, or a persecuting brother?"

"I have no such relations," said the stranger; "I never knew my mother, I *have* a brother, indeed, but he is far, far away."

"Then in what way can my knowledge of your name and residence so seriously involve your peace or comfort?" asked Edward.

"Why really," replied the young lady, smiling, "one is not in the habit of making confidences upon such very short acquaintance, nor am I accustomed to favour perfect strangers with my history at sight."

"I do not consider myself a perfect stranger," said Maxwell, rather piqued; "I flattered myself that I had some little claim to your friendship, and—"

"— Indeed you have," interrupted his companion. "I was wrong; I spoke flippantly—foolishly. I am grateful, most grateful to you,

but it is impossible, utterly impossible, to permit our acquaintance to continue; indeed, I must entreat you to quit me at this very moment—here we are in the Park; some one may see me who knows me, and—"

"—Well, and what then?" said Maxwell. "I assure you there is nothing so killing against my character in the world, that you need tremble at an association with me, even in the most public place. I honestly confess, with a candour I should rejoice in finding reciprocal, that it is the most earnest wish of my heart to continue to improve the acquaintance between us, which accident has so curiously originated. I am perfectly serious when I tell you that my whole mind has been occupied by the thoughts of you ever since we parted, and that I feel my happiness to depend entirely upon the permission, which I request to be introduced to your family."

"*My* family!" said the young lady, whose eyes filled with tears at the word. "God help me, Sir, you little know the miseries of her whom you are addressing. I tell you at once, since you desire candour, that you must utterly and entirely banish me from your thoughts, for

your own sake if not for mine—I am to be shunned and avoided."

"I cannot imagine the necessity of such a course of conduct on either of our parts," said Edward. "A being all beauty, and softness, and grace, like you, to be shunned—no—listen to me—for Heaven's sake hear me—"

"Well," said she, "speak quickly; we must part immediately. I repeat to you I am known here. What—what is it you would say?"

"I would tell you that my views and feelings," said Edward, "are fair and honourable; that all the admiration I felt before, is heightened and increased by this second meeting; that the peculiarity and difficulty of your situation as you describe it, add, if possible, to the interest with which you had previously inspired me. In order to claim your confidence, I shall in the first place declare myself to you, my name, my station in society, and my expectations. I am—"

"—Hush, hush!" whispered the young lady, "here's some one coming I know—leave me, leave me—pray, pray leave me; at least for a few moments."

Edward, awed by her energetic manner, and fascinated by her sweet expression of countenance, obeyed, and let her pass on. A man of

the shabbiest possible appearance approached and spoke to the fair object of his affections; they appeared to converse familiarly—to Edward's horror and surprise, the man turned about and walked *with* her, and that too apparently by her invitation. She never raised her head, nor looked to see if Edward followed, which, as she might have concluded, he did. They proceeded down the Park, and through the passage at Spring Gardens,—still Edward pursued at a *respectful* distance—they crossed the street—they entered the yard of the Golden Cross, at Charing Cross—still Edward followed, until having past the gateway, he suddenly missed the fair object of his adoration, but encountered the man.

"Are you looking for that young lady, Sir?" said the man.

"What young lady?" said Edward, somewhat taken abrupt by the address.

"The young lady in black?" said the man.

"Why—yes, yes, I am," replied Maxwell.

"She'll be out in a minute or two, Sir," said the fellow.

"She will?" said Edward, and thought he saw something of a connivance between them, and began to think the beautiful vision not quite

so admirable as she had struck him to be before that little affair took place. But then her manner—her conversation—her tears.

"Pray," said Edward, "what is the young lady's name?"

"I can't say, Sir," said the man.

"Is there nothing will prevail upon you to tell me—" said Edward, at the same moment preparing to produce his purse.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," continued the fellow; "if you'll wait here two minutes, I'll fetch her, and she shall tell you herself."

"Do you think she will?" said Maxwell.

"Rely upon *me*," said the man. "*If I* bring her to you, she'll not hesitate to tell you her name, and where she lives."

Saying which the man proceeded to produce the fair lady.

Edward waited their return with considerable patience, but nobody appeared. He then walked up the yard—saw nobody like either his male *friend*, or his female acquaintance—looked into the different coach offices—not there; peered into the windows of a tap room, pryed into the Times Brighton coach, just on the point of starting, and then returned towards the gateway.

"Are you looking for any body, Sir?" said one of those nondescript idlers who are always lingering about such places.

"Yes," said Edward; "I am looking for the man I was speaking to just now."

"Oh! he's gone out through the gate in St. Martin's Lane," said the man.

"Who is he?" asked Edward, thinking to get a clue.

"He's one of the traps as belongs to Union Hall."

"A what?" said Edward.

"He's a hofficer," said the man.

Edward was more puzzled than before; it seemed certainly as if the lady with whom he was walking had recognized this fellow as an acquaintance, or else it would appear that she had put herself under his protection to secure herself from the advances of her pursuer; but then it seemed such an extraordinary piece of cunning to bring her in at one gate of the inn, and let her out at another. He was convinced that his charmer must be in the house—that she was anxious, as she had said she was, to avoid him, and had engaged this minion of the law to aid her escape from *him*. It was quite evident she must be some beautiful creature from the country, ill

used by her family, and living for the present at the Golden Cross, Charing Cross.

Edward having got this clue, determined to follow it up. He was now convinced that he had housed his fair one; accordingly he proceeded into the coffee room, and ordering some hot nastiness, which, in such places is called soup, he began to make a sort of acquaintance with a very respectable looking waiter, upon whose prudence and sagacity he thought he could rely, and having paid for his mess, and made a donation to the waiter of more than double its value, he, in a half whisper, inquired whether there was a lady staying in the house, who wore deep mourning—whether she was living there alone, or had a father, or mother, or brother, or uncle or aunt with her.

The question succeeded to a miracle—there *was* a lady in mourning—she *had* been out walking—had just before returned—she came from the country, and her name was Scrimshaw.

"How long has she been here?" said Edward.

"About a fortnight or rather better, perhaps," said the waiter; "she generally goes out to walk in the forenoon, in the Park, I

think, and then she comes in and has a mutton chop or two, and some pickles and porter, for luncheon, and then lies down till dinner time; but she has no living creature here with her, she pays her bill every Saturday, and in that case you see, Sir, we make it a point never to ask any superfluous questions."

Scrimshaw—porter—pickles—sleeps till dinner. "Umph! thank you," said Edward; "I was very curious to know who she was."

"Why, Sir, so are we," said the waiter. "She's uncommon good natured to all the servants; she did bring a sort of maid of her own, but she has discharged her; and what she tells my missis is, that she is a waiting here for some gentleman as she expects somewhere out of the country."

"Enough—get me a bottle of soda water," said Edward, resolved to make this order the medium for an increased largess to the waiter.

The command was obeyed—the soda water swallowed, the waiter remunerated, and Edward again in the street in five minutes.

It is difficult to describe the satisfaction of the ardent and anxious young man at having discovered, by his own excess of prudence, the retreat of the fair *incognita;* although it

must be confessed there were some drawbacks to the pleasure he derived from the knowledge he had acquired. In the first place there was something strange in a beautiful girl living alone at a London inn, without servants; something more strange in her having dismissed the only attendant she had; something very odd in her living two or three weeks alone and unattended; and something more odd yet, in her familiar association with a police officer. The episodaical account of the mutton chops and porter for luncheon, rather spoiled the sentimentality of the affair; but *then*, perhaps, she was consumptive, and had been recommended, upon the new system, to eat mutton chops and drink porter; and besides, luncheon was the principal meal of ladies; and besides, perhaps every lady ate mutton chops and drank porter for luncheon, but nobody knew it, because they did not feed under the inspection of bribeable waiters.

His plan, however, was very speedily resolved upon: whatever objections she might have to being seen in his company in public, or whatever delicacy she might feel with regard to disclosures respecting her family, in conversation, a letter addressed to her, might gain her confidence, and she might be induced, in writing, to

disclose circumstances of which her innate delicacy would forbid her to speak.

The minutes seemed hours until the anxious young man was seated in his study, with the materials for writing before him. His eye, "in a fine phrenzy rolling," and everything actually in progress for opening the correspondence; with a flushed cheek, and a trembling hand, he wrote as follows:—

"*Tuesday.*

"That I have discovered your retreat, after all the precautions you adopted, may prove to you, at least, that I am not easily baffled, nor inclined to give up one upon whose attention, circumstances have conspired to give me, at least, a fair claim. You, no doubt, thought by your manœuvres with your friend the officer—you see I know everything—to evade my vigilance; but you have failed, and I do not hesitate to throw myself upon your good feelings—upon your justice—if I may not claim any warmer sentiment, to ask you whether I deserve the conduct you have thought proper to adopt, or whether I should not be the meanest of God's creatures to surrender, after what has occurred, one to whom I honestly and candidly admit

myself to have been devoted ever since I first became acquainted with her.

"Young as I am, I think I know enough of the world not to build my hopes of happiness upon so sandy a foundation as mere personal appearance. The attractions of beauty alone would have failed to hold me, did I not know that in her I so ardently admire, there exists a more permanent power over my feelings and affection, than the mere external advantages of person could ever possess. It is true my acquaintance with you is not of a nature to warrant this sort of address; but in what manner else can I endeavour to avert a blow which will destroy my future comfort? How else check you in a course of proceeding which you seem resolved to adopt? How else assert my claim to a heart, which, if I know myself, I have deserved to possess.

"As candour is, in *my* mind, a virtue of the first quality, I shall not hesitate at once to avow myself; feeling assured, when you revolve all the circumstances of the case, you will not hesitate to do me justice. Had I a desire to entrap you into any disclosures, which it might be disagreeable to you to make, I might pursue a different course—follow your steps—watch your

proceedings—and at last come forward in a much more questionable shape; but I seek to take no advantage of you. By whatever circumstances you may have been induced to act towards me as you have done, I do not impeach your motives. Your acquaintance with me is not perhaps such as to have interested you in my behalf; still, I repeat, I am resolved to be candid—to announce to you, in my proper person and character, the knowledge I have gained of your residence in town, and my determination, by every fair and honourable means in my power, to attain the object of my hopes and wishes, upon a point the most important in human life.

"If you are surprised at the absence of passion in this appeal, you should recollect, that the more deeply rooted feeling is, the less effect it produces externally—shallow brooks ripple loudly over the pebbles, but the deep stream runs silently. Let me entreat you, then, write to me, one line expressive of your determination—appoint some spot to meet me, if you consider your inn an inconvenient place; or, if you think I may there encounter the friend *whom you expect from the country*—you see I know all—aye, ever since your arrival, even up to the

dismissal of your attendant—so disguise with me is useless. Again I entreat you to consider my feelings, and the suspense in which I must remain till I hear from you; and believe me yours,

"EDWARD MAXWELL."

"——— *Street*,

"*Burlington Gardens.*"

Edward read and re-read this epistle, which did not at all satisfy him as to the warmth of its expression; but he reasoned upon its apparent coolness thus:—If the young lady were inclined to favour his suit, the modesty and candour of his avowal were quite sufficient to extract a confession: while if, on the other hand, she chose to repel him roughly, and perhaps exhibit his effusion to her expected friend from the country, it would be wise not to add a new folio to that school of amatory literature, specimens of which are occasionally brought before the public, in the course of those unreadable trials to which the eyes of the world are constantly directed, in the public newspapers.

In less than ten minutes, Edward's servant was despatched to the Golden Cross; and before dinner was announced, the ardent lover had the

satisfaction to know, that his appeal was safely lodged in the hands of the gentle Scrimshaw, a name which, being the only objectionable quality of the lady, as far as he yet knew, he felt particularly anxious to change as soon as possible.

To the family circle at Maxwell's, the only addition, was the clerical brother of the humourist Moss, who had arrived in the metropolis, preparatory to the performance of the sacred duty of uniting the lovers. It was in vain for Edward to attempt to conceal, from Kitty, his success with respect to Miss Scrimshaw; and, by degrees, before the evening was half over, his secret was all told to his sister, under a strict promise not to divulge the particulars; a promise which she, who, to say truth, had never entertained any very great regard for the wealthy Miss Epsworth, intended most religiously to keep. However, between nine and ten o'clock, a letter was delivered to Edward, luckily just at a period when his excellent parent was most attentively carrying on his rubber of whist, so that the trepidation and confusion which the arrival of that which the anxious youth truly anticipated, was a communication from his fair correspondent, were not perceived by that

exemplary personage. It was in vain to attempt to open or read an answer so important, and so fraught with interest, as this must unquestionably be, in the society of others. He therefore hastily jumped up, and lighting a chamber candle (the family lights being always arranged on a small table, just within the front drawing-room), flew up stairs to his dressing-room, where, with devouring eyes, he read what follows :—

"Sir,

"I am quite sewer you well exquese me for wot has hapened, wen I explain my forloun sityation—nothink helse wood hav enduced me to hackt as I haf dun, for what you say about the clam upon a hart which ort by wrights to be your hone, is as true as Jospell; but one is not hallways uns own missuss, so that is the playing truth on it.

"Your noshuns of booty has ad nothink to do with the rites of it, and if the hofficer you spekes of had not a greater hole of me than mear purse-washun, I shod not haf thote of cumming here. The minuet I seed your name I thout I shoed hav dyde, because such honorable conduk I do not think I desarve, howsomever you nose best,

althow how you got sent of my cumming into thes house I dont now, for I tuck every pawsable preekaution not to be diskevered while I was weighting in toone for one wich, it brakes my hart to now is your rifle.

"I trust you will due nothun desprut, and I will hopen my art to you, for I am by natur candied, and will explayn how it hall hapened that I was engagged at hall; meanwile, if you please to say at wot our I may kall at your farthers ouse or elsewere, I will kontrive so has to kip my apointmeant let kum wot wil, for I never has repinted but once wot I haf ondertakein, so in hops to ear from you in coarse two morrow,

"I rest yewers,
"Humbelly,
"MARTHA SCRIMSHAW."

"Mr. Edward Maxwell, Esq."

The charms of magic are said to be dissolved, if a word is spoken; certain it is that the charms of Miss Patty Scrimshaw were most surprisingly dissipated by the words she had written. Edward re-read the strange letter—threw it down—then, took it up again—and at last burst into an immoderate fit of laughter; not that he held

fine writing to be an essential in matters of love; but in the sort of connexion he had proposed to the beautiful girl, certainly something more like general accomplishment was, if not absolutely necessary, at least extremely desirable.

The thing, indeed, struck him to be so absurd, and so nearly impossible into the bargain, that he would not have hesitated a moment in deciding, that there had been some mistake in the delivery of his letter, but that his fair correspondent referred, point by point, to his appeal to her, and recalled the circumstances as they had actually occurred, even to his claim upon her heart, and to her contrivance, in conjunction with the officer, to evade his search.

Ned was puzzled—he was ashamed to disclose the whole of the affair to his sister, who was generally his counciller in matters of the heart—none of which, however, in which she had been asked for advice before, had gone the length of a correspondence, and he could not bear to admit, that this very poor attempt at literature should be exhibited, as coming from a creature about whose delicacy, grace, and eloquence, he had been so long raving. His course was very soon determined upon. He, like many other persons much older and wiser, had been dazzled

and deceived by appearances. His object had been a fair and honourable proposal to a lovely, and, as he naturally imagined, a highly accomplished person—he had acted upon his feelings—he had opened a channel of communication in his own name—and if he had not conducted himself with quite so much prudence and caution as an older man would have done, still he had compromised neither his own honour, nor the young lady's delicacy. She, it appeared by her own admission, was expecting a favoured lover, so that it was rather an alleviation of his regret, than otherwise, that he had furnished so strong a written evidence of her own unfitness for the sphere of society in which, as his wife, she would have been destined to move. To act dishonourably by the dear confiding creature, never entered his head, although her extraordinary willingness to grant him a meeting so soon as she had ascertained that he was of a certain rank and standing in society, and so soon after her decided refusal of a continuance of their acquaintance, gave him a confused idea that she was not altogether so very correct as he at first thought; and he recurred to Moss's satirical observations upon the whole adventure, with the feeling which very often accompanied

similar references, that, after all, nobody knew the world better than Mr. Godfrey Moss.

Under all the circumstances, he resolved to cut the connexion at a blow—to decline the visit—to admit the superior claims of the expected Romeo—and to take a desperate measure in order to rid himself at once of an entanglement, out of which, however much he might admire the personal attractions of Miss Scrimshaw, he plainly saw he could not otherwise come fairly, clearly, and honourably; and, accordingly, without farther consultation or consideration, he wrote a note, full of extraordinary civility, stating that he was unfortunately obliged to leave London; and as the young lady had, in her letter, been so clear and explicit, he thought it would be better for both their sakes, that they should not expose themselves to the needless ordeal of a meeting, from which no ulterior good could accrue to either; and having sealed and directed his brief, but pithy epistle, he rang his bell, and delivering it to his servant, ordered him to carry it forthwith to the inn, and on no account to wait for an answer.

Having concluded this business, he hastily deposited the gentle Martha's delicate epistle in his writing-desk, and repaired to the drawing-

room, where a consciousness of the sort of work he had been doing, carried his eye direct to the expressive countenance of his sister Katherine, who was sitting on the sofa, working, during the rubber in which the Mosses, her father, and Apperton were engaged, looking so calm and so placid, and so very easy in her mind, that nobody who saw her would have guessed her wedding-day to have been so very near at hand.

But if Katherine appeared thus indifferent to matters which so nearly and vitally concerned herself, she was perfectly alive to the emotions by which she saw her brother affected. The moment he returned to the room, she was convinced that he had received some intelligence respecting his fair *incognita*.

"Well, Edward," said she, as he placed himself beside her on the sofa,—"any news of the fugitive?"

"Enough, dear Kate," replied he, "to satisfy me of the utter folly of farther pursuit; and so let me beg of you never to recur to a subject, the discussion of which can only serve to prove the blindness of youthful love, and a woeful want of experience on the part of your poor simple-minded brother."

"The latter part of your position, I am ready

to admit, Ned," said Miss Maxwell, "but the former, I—"

"What, Kitty,—thinking of —— ?"

"Edward," said Miss Maxwell, with a look of indescribable anguish,—"never, never, as you value my happiness, allude to *that* person or any subject with which he is connected."

"Well, a bargain then," cried Edward;—"*you* never mention my wild goose chase after my Dulcinea of Drury-lane."

"What bargains are you making, Master Neddums?" said Moss, taking snuff, while his brother was dealing;—"I wish you'd ring the bell, and ask for something to drink."

"What, drink again?" said Maxwell, "fearless of consequences."

"He gets a good lesson here," said the clerical Moss;—"there are no race of people in the world who eat and drink half so much as you surgeons and physicians."

"But we are like the fire-eaters at fairs," said Maxwell,—"we have our antidotes and preventives."

"Ah, well, Mack," said the lay Moss,—"a few drops, more or less, now, will make no difference; and it's of no use to make an old man miserable by way of lengthening his days."

" Every glass of spirits," said Apperton, " is a nail in your coffin."

" Well, and what then, stockbroker?" replied the advocate of grog;—" the more nails in my coffin, the smarter my funeral. I can't help it; —come, Kittums, dear, mix me some ginnums and water, and let's see what's trumps. I shan't have you long to brew for me."

" I assure you, Doctor," said Apperton,— " you shall have the advantage of her abilities that way, so long as you choose to patronize her manufacture."

" Thank you, thank you," said Moss. " Well, where are the cards? Oh, Maxwell cuts,—to be sure he's used to it;" saying which, Moss received from the fair hand of his Hebe a glass of his favourite potation, the strength of which the innocent colour of the spirit did not betray. Placing it beside him, amongst his counters, he proceeded with his game, much more placidly than before.

" Kate," said Edward, joining her again on the sofa, " I have at length made up my mind to the deciding measure of my life.—I have determined upon ending a short life of romance by obeying my father's wishes, and marrying Jane."

" Why, this is marvellous," said Kate: " after the continued confidential expressions of your distaste for Miss Epsworth, now all at once to resolve to unite yourself to her eternally."

" Sometimes these things are more matter of convenience than choice," said Edward.

" Why, yes,—that," replied his sister, in a rather confused manner,—" that is very true, I admit."

" And if, Kate," continued he, " a man cannot marry the only person in the world he really loves, and yet it is thought desirable that a marriage should take place, why, to me—at least at my time of life—it seems a matter of perfect indifference who is to be the person."

" You are cruel to your sister, Edward," said Katherine, " for the sake of shewing your perception, and perhaps your wit. It is perhaps enough to gratify your vanity to tell you that I sensibly feel the force of your allusion, but my situation is wholly different from yours. —I follow the wishes of a parent in taking a step which is in itself, as you know, at least a matter of indifference to me, yet I shall ever be found doing my duty, and exerting myself for the happiness and respectability of my husband:—with you—"

"With me, Kate," interrupted her brother, —"how is it?—I have always been considered the future husband of my distant relative, Miss Epsworth. I have no positive objection to her, but I felt I never could love her enthusiastically, or with that devotion which I, like *you*, believe to be essential to what Apperton in his mercantile jargon would call happiness 'first class A,' and therefore I would rather have avoided an union with a girl who never could command all my affection. Since I felt this, I have accidentally seen a being whose beauty and manners have taken such full and entire possession of me, that my heart never can be entirely any woman's except hers—with *her* all further acquaintance must cease, and the first hope of my life in the way of love is blighted. Can you not then sympathise with me, when, feeling as I feel, I would now rather do that, which will gratify my family and connexions by marrying as they wish, than give my divided affections to some object less desirable in their eyes?"

"Don't speak so loud," said Kate, perceiving that Moss, with his glass in his hand—his drinking glass—had fixed his eyes upon them with an expression perfectly intelligible to *her;*

and as she surmised had overheard some part of this curious disquisition upon the delicate separation of rapturous love and prudential affection——

"We are both strangely situated," said Katherine, softly,—"but you, Edward, far differently from me—you are younger—you have the world before you—and you are free. I have been addressed by a man, of whom all who know him speak well and highly, whose professional character and rectitude are the theme of universal praise; he is past that period of life which you have hardly attained, and seeks to enjoy a rational existence with a companion whom he has flattered with his affection and esteem—but you—"

"I—I, Kitty, am just as desperate as you," cried Edward.—"I have lost all that interested me. I care now for nothing but deciding my fate, and setting myself down in the country, a domestic young man at—"

"Twenty-two years of age," said Kate; "no, no, if you love your cousin, marry her, she is rich and attached to you, I believe; it is on all accounts a very desirable match, but do not hastily shut yourself out from every chance of more exalted happiness, in a fit of spleen,

caused, as I suppose, by the cold looks of a frowning beauty."

"Oh, no—no—indeed it isn't that," said Edward, not a little piqued at his sister's supposition, so injurious to his vanity: "my angel is kind beyond measure, volunteers a meeting, or even a visit to me here, but I have acted prudently and terminated the correspondence."

"For good and substantial reasons, no doubt," said Kate.

This was more than Edward could bear, and resolving upon making his sister a real confidante, he ran to his room, and returned almost breathless with the letter he had received from Miss Scrimshaw; the laughter excited by which, on the part of Miss Maxwell, was so loud, so long, and so very unusual, that it was unanimously resolved, by the whist party, to call upon the laugher to account for her extraordinary mirth. Edward for a long time resisted, on the plea, that a female's letter, however odd and strange, ought, under all circumstances, to be held sacred; until an absolution having been granted by Kitty herself, who declared her right of judging in such a case, and who was anxious that the true cause of her gaiety should be fairly exhibited, the

ever-memorable epistle was read by the young gentleman himself to the assembled whist players—among whom no one enjoyed it more than Moss, who chuckled to hear the triumphant fulfilment of all his prognostications, as to the forlorn damsel of Drury-lane.

Neither Maxwell, nor Apperton, nor even the vicar of Fudley cum Pipes was backward in raillery, and poor Edward was forced to retire to rest, under as heavy a fire of jokes and laughter as ever assailed an unfortunate Philander after a signal defeat.

One kind heart alone felt pain for him, and that was Kitty's; the conversation she had had with her brother was not so easily obliterated from her recollection; she saw by his manner that he was vexed and mortified, and that his vexation and mortification would speedily vent themselves in an avowal of his determination to marry his cousin, of whom his general opinion had been expressed so frequently, and in such unqualified language, as left no doubt of its sincerity. She hoped that this resolution would be re-considered, yet she saw fresh excitement to it in the ridicule heaped upon the frustration of his promised speculation, and sympathising in a sentiment

which now appeared to her to be common to them both, felt convinced that he would plunge into the marriage which his heart rejected, merely for the purpose of rescuing himself from the character of a foiled, rejected, disappointed lover.

With what justice Miss Katherine Maxwell drew her conclusions, time, and perhaps the next chapter, will shew.

CHAPTER VI.

"There be three parts of business; the preparation; the debate or examination; and the perfection: whereof if you look for despatch, let the middle be the work of many, and the first and last the work of few."

LORD BACON.

"AND an excellent and wise resolution too," said Maxwell, entering the drawing-room, after a conversation with his son in the library, which had occupied the time, from the breaking up of the breakfast-table until noon.

"I can guess what it is," exclaimed Katherine.

"So can I," cried Moss.

"Kate knows," said Edward, "and therefore I dare say Mousetrap is in the secret."

"We have laughed you into a marriage with the Jenny cretur," said Godfrey.

"And extremely happy it makes me that you have," replied the surgeon. "We shall now have a double wedding."

"From which," said Moss, "you expect double diversion, I suppose, as sportsmen do from double-barrelled guns; but how's that to be managed?—is Kittum's wedding to be put off?"

"If she will give us leave," said her father, "to postpone it for ten days or a fortnight."

"I'll answer for *her*," said Moss, "but I cannot answer for my brother, for he must be down at Fudley next week—it is Visitation time, and the Archdeacon, the Bishop's eye as I call him, comes there to poke about and see that the church steeples are all in order."

"But he can return to us," said Maxwell.

"But then," said Edward, "poor Katherine's happiness will be delayed, nearly three weeks."

"Oh, pray don't mind *me*, Ned," said his sister. "If you, who are my junior, can consent to wait so long, surely I can bear the postponement."

"I hate putting off marriages," said Moss, taking a huge pinch of snuff—"and Apperton is not here to consent."

"I should, under ordinary circumstances, decidedly object to delays in such matters," said Maxwell, "but on this special occasion I confess I think it would be both agreeable and desirable to conclude the two affairs simultaneously; it would look well, and I should feel settled and happy."

"And so should I, Sir," said Edward, "settled for life."

"Yes, and another thing I can tell you," said Moss—"mark my words—if you stand shilly shally with that Jenny cretur, your little whiffling friend, the monkey-faced major, will nick her up, as sure as my name's Moss."

"There, my dear Mousetrap," said Edward, "I flatter myself you are somewhat in error,—however, as I have said to my father, if the connexion is to be made, it may as well be made at once. I am just in the humour to settle, and I should like, if possible, to make up a matrimonial rubber."

"There seems but one difficulty," said Kate, "and that arises thus—Edward has for the last year pointedly and sedulously avoided his cousin Jane, and has merely passed a formal week or two at Dulham house in the course of the twelvemonth, and those by instalments of a day

at a time: she I know has felt piqued, and indeed has frequently written to me, to express her apprehension that Ned didn't feel any great affection for her—now how the chilled embers of her attachment are to be fanned up into a flame strong enough to burn upon the altar of Hymen in fourteen days, 'from the date hereof,' I confess myself unable to exactly comprehend."

"Trash, about the altar of Hymen," said Moss, "who's Hymen? Jenny Epsworth will jump as high as a cretur with one leg shorter than another can, to get any body to marry her —and if—"

"My dear Mousetrap," interrupted Edward, "a joke's a joke, but both Jane's legs are precisely of the same length, and therefore don't calumniate her."

"But if they are not, I suppose your father there can put 'em to rights," said Moss; "I don't care about her legs, nor you either—"

"Come, come," said the elder Maxwell, "do not let us be too hard upon Edward—he knows that he obliges me when he consents to do that, which, in a worldly point of view, must be advantageous and agreeable to himself, and if Jane is not beautiful, we cannot help it; I have no doubt she is extremely good."

"And if not handsome," said Moss, "thinks herself so, which perhaps makes her goodnatured."

"Still," said Kate, "I don't understand how this avowal and declaration, and acceptance, and arrangement, and all the preliminaries and all the ratifications can be managed in a fortnight."

"I'll write to her to-day," said Edward.

"What, and order a wife, as you would a coat?" said Moss.

"No, I will explain my feelings and views," said he, "which I can do better in a letter than in an interview—then, if her reply is warm and encouraging, I will start, take advantage of the sunshine, soothe her, please her, win her, and bring her up to London, aunt and all."

"Depend upon it," said the elder Maxwell, "Edward knows the degree of influence he has over her, and so let him manage his matters in his own way. I confess the view he has at length taken of the case, is highly satisfactory to me, and has been brought about, as he says, by reflection."

"And the refusal of Patty Scrimshaw, of the Golden Cross, Charing-cross," said Moss; "psha—trash—bou—but never mind—here comes the old six-and-eightpenny stuff again—

however, my poor brother may toddle off to Fudley, by to-night's mail, he'll not be wanted for three weeks at least—perhaps never—Eh, Kittums? there's no knowing what slips may happen between the cup and the lip."

"You make fewer than any man I ever met with, Moss," said the elder Maxwell.

"That's right, Mack," said Moss, "throw your wishy washy gin and water in my face—thank my stars, I can get as much blue ruin as will satisfy me, for ten-pence a day, so you need not reproach me with the expense of my beverage."

"Well, Kitty, we have *your* consent then, at all events," said Edward, "to the postponement."

"Oh yes," replied Kate, with a look which conveyed all her meaning to her brother, who knew precisely where her thoughts were, whenever the wedding-day was mentioned.

"I've a good mind to go down myself to Fudley with Jack," said Moss. "I'll take a box of cigars with me—and he has got the Gentleman's Magazine, which I havn't read over above ten times, down at the vicarage, and there's the Apothecary, and the Attorney, very conversible creturs—a little fresh air will do me good,

and so will the new laid eggs, and the cream, and some of his old port; and then I shall be out of the way, and not spoil the billing and cooing. I'll be hanged but I'll go."

"You are not affronted, are you, Moss?" said Maxwell.

"No, not I," replied Moss; "you are a well-meaning cretur; when I'm hit I can hit again, but I don't mind *you*, though you *do* grumble at my excess – if you kept a good stock of brandy and gin in your house you would'nt feel it so much. All the spirits you buy, go to keep dead men's fingers and toes in, and such trash as that."

"I shall never forgive you, my dear Mouse-trap," said Kate, "if you desert me."

"I'd rather die—and that's saying a great deal for a fellow so fond of living as I am," said Moss. "No—no—I'll be off to-night—I'll pack up a fortnight's stock of linen in a pocket handkerchief. I shan't want to change my coat, or the etcetera, so I can pop a razor in my waistcoat pocket, and borrow a brush at my brother's. I hate parade, and preparation; there's nothing like compactness for comfort—no sooner said than done."

After which brief lecture upon the luxuries of

life, Godfrey Moss removed himself, for the purpose of communicating to the vicar the proposed postponement of the wedding, and his own proposition of accompanying him into Lincolnshire.

It was not until after a long conversation between the brother and sister, that Edward resolved to adhere to his determination with respect to Miss Epsworth; he had promised his father—his hopes had been blighted—and so he went over all the reasonings of the previous evening, and at length proceeded to write the avowal of his anxious desire to conclude that which had always been considered an engagement between them.

When Apperton returned from the city, it was held to be a matter of delicacy, and even difficulty, to announce to him the change which had been made in the arrangements for the nuptials, but the elder Maxwell undertook to negociate the matter, and having, by a circuitous route, mentioned the subject of Edward's much wished-for marriage with his cousin, came at last to the point, and hoped that Apperton would not feel annoyed at their having altered and postponed the day without waiting to consult him, explaining, at the same time, the absolute neces-

sity that existed, for the presence of the reverend vicar of Fudley cum Pipes at his living in the intermediate time.

Kate entered the room during the discussion, and candid, or perhaps careless as she was upon the points of etiquette connected with the approaching ceremony, even *she* thought it necessary to put on an air of something like pique and dissatisfaction at the alteration.

"Then, when is it to be?" said Apperton.

"We now propose to-morrow three weeks," said Maxwell.

"Let me see—Tuesday—Thursday—Friday,—that will be the 14th," said Apperton.

"Exactly," said Maxwell.

"Twenty-two days," said Katherine, with a semi-sigh.

A pause ensued. The father and daughter were alarmed; they thought they had wounded the delicacy, and hurt the feelings of the ardent lover.

"The 14th?" repeated Apperton,—"couldn't we put it off till the 21st?—it would be more convenient to me, because of the 15th, you see, being the day for the account."

They were entirely relieved from all their embarrassments, and the 21st was fixed.

Kate looked at her future husband for above half a minute after he had begged for an "extension of time," as he would have called it, and thought of the being, of whom she might, after the 21st never think without sinning.

The new arrangement was reported to the two travellers, who expressed great satisfaction that they might have four more days in the country; but Moss made no addition to his stock of drapery on that account: and at past ten o'clock that evening the brothers were seated, "*vis-à-vis*," in the Hull and Barton Royal Mail, at Ware, having there refreshed themselves with supper, and whence they departed with lighted cigars in their mouths, and, as their calumniators say, a well-sized bottle of mahogany-coloured brandy and water in the coach pocket.

The evening in London was not passed in a manner half so lively or exhilarating; Maxwell and Apperton talked in an under-tone of securities and bonds, and a great fluctuation, and a wonderful opportunity of purchasing shares in the Steam Hatching Poultry Company for almost nothing; to all of which the surgeon appeared most attentively listening, occasionally rising from his seat, and standing with his back to the fire-place, rattling all the silver in his

breeches pocket whenever the great gains, likely to accrue from the innumerable speculations of his enterprising son-in-law, were alluded to in the course of their interesting and exciting conversation.

Kate and her brother (whose spirits had met with a check, and whose views and feelings had taken a turn which led him to domesticate himself, and seek a sort of consolation in his sister's society), remained in another sort of conversation at the other end of the room; and it must be admitted that a more dull, or even uncomfortable evening, has seldom been passed. Indeed latterly the liveliness formerly imparted to Maxwell's family circle, by the continued droppings in of stray friends, had very much diminished since the formal announcement of Katherine's approaching marriage: those considerate acquaintances thought the domestic circle ought not to be broken in upon, and that the young people would be much happier alone. To be sure the casual every-day associates of the surgeon and his children did not see so deeply into the arcana of the family circle as we do, nor knew so well the real state of affairs in progress.

The absence of the two brothers Moss was a subject of regret, silent on the part of Kitty,

and avowed on the part of her father; the little bustle about the brandy and water, the fidget, the snarl, the joke, the grumble even of the misanthrope, would have come as reliefs to the family party, all of whom felt the announcement of bed-time to be the most agreeable event of the evening.

But the change was transient, for when Kate again found herself alone, again pressed her pillow and yet slept not; when she again revolved in her mind the importance of the step she was about to take, the eternal link she was about to forge for herself; a link, which, while it bound her to one, whom, if she could not fail to esteem, it was clear to herself she could never ardently admire, ought at once and for ever to kill the hopes, which, though dormant in the heart of her who loves, in sorrow and in silence, never die; she sighed, and hid her burning face in her hands until a flood of tears relieved her.

Within an hour of the period at which she saw her lover receive the news of the delay of his happiness, not only with composure and apathy, but with a declared wish of further postponement, she had seen in the newspapers the name, the dreaded name, which never passed her lips, and which acted upon her mind and

feelings, like the most potent spell of magic whenever she beheld it written. Edward had seen it too—it appeared under the head of India news, and announced the arrival of the adored, lost individual from Calcutta, at the Cape of Good Hope, for the benefit of his health.

He was ill—dying perhaps—far—far from his friends—from all that was dear to him. What then?—what interest had *she* in his welfare?—She had obeyed the dictates of reason and the commands of her father—she had discarded and rejected him—she had accepted another husband—and *that* husband would claim her, perhaps on the day—the very day—on which the only being she had ever loved was buried in a foreign grave, an alien from his home, an exile from his country. An honourable exile it is true; but the thought of his distress, his illness, his sorrow and his probable death, harrowed up her soul, and from the bottom of her heart did she repent, that what she now stigmatized as worldly motives, had induced her under any circumstances to put the final fatal seal upon his exclusion from her love for ever.

It was vain to reason; the very fact of his anticipated death might have in some degree reconciled her to the step she had taken.

The report announced him "dangerously ill." He was, perhaps, already gone from this toilsome world, and Apperton would wed a widowed heart, wholly unconscious of the woe that pained it. It is not till the moment comes, when the struggle is to be made, that we know the importance of the sacrifice we are about to consummate. The phrenzy of feeling, to which Kate Maxwell had worked herself by the recollection of foregone days, self-reproach for her former compliance with the will of her father, and equal self-reproach for her more recent obedience to him, was all new to her—her placid character, her constitutional calmness and coolness, all the philosophy of reason, and of a mind well regulated and highly principled, gave way to the agonizing remorse which overcame her; yet, such is the strangeness of feelings so acted upon, that recapitulating to herself the merits and claims of Apperton upon her affection, she rejoiced to find that no comparison could be instituted between *him* and the loved being she had for ever lost—if there had been an approach to rivalry in person, or manners, mind or accomplishments, she might have been considered fickle, she might have been supposed by those who knew her secret to have desired to obliterate the recollection of her first love

by some supposed superior attractions in another suitor. No one now could suspect her of such a desire in marrying Apperton, who was in every point as opposite to his predecessor in her heart, as light to darkness.

When morning arrived, Katherine's natural propriety and prudence overcame the tumult of her passions, and at breakfast she appeared the same kind and affectionate daughter, as ever; devoted to the duties of her station, and resolved by the aid of that practical piety, which formed at once her consolation and support, to fulfil all that she had proposed to herself to do, and on which she knew depended the happiness of her father, and the comfort of his declining years.

Edward had not slept much, for he had in some degree, but not quite so deeply, involved himself in an affair, which now the day had passed and night come, *he* almost began to repent of—indeed, it seemed, as if the whole family were to be made wretched by matches of expediency; save and except that Edward had resigned his prior attachment (if attachment it could be called,) in disgust, while his sister's was not a voluntary abandonment of the fondest and earliest wish of her heart.

However, Edward was young and volatile

and moreover, a man. The effect of love upon men is so totally different from that which it has upon the softer, gentler, and kinder sex, that no parity of reasoning will hold upon the different cases or symptoms. Edward "voted marrying Jane a bore, and even hoped she would refuse him," and so on; at all of which votings and hopings his hearers laughed, and taxed him with a cautious mode of preparing for the worst, so as to give his vanity and *amour-propre* as gentle a fall as possible; while Kate sat thoughtful and silent, with an aching heart, that, according to the ways of the world and the usages of society, must have burst and broken, before she dared give utterance to her real sentiments.

It is difficult, and perhaps it would not be interesting, to describe accurately the feverish, and uncomfortable state in which the day passed at Maxwell's. It seemed as if the last four-and-twenty hours had brought Edward and his sister more intimately acquainted with each other than they ever had been before—such is the force of sympathy. Edward had shewn her that he was perfectly aware of her hidden sentiments and affections, and in full possession of the secret which she thought no human being knew besides herself. She had, up to this period, acting upon

the feeling universally given by seniority, however trifling in youth, considered Edward merely as a boy—her little brother—and could scarcely believe her senses, when she found him sympathizing with her, and entering cordially into all her views and propositions, upon what, notwithstanding her subdued feelings, was in fact the important, vital point of her life.

The morning wasted away, and Edward felt the more worried from the consciousness that he could not hear from Miss Epsworth, nor ascertain the temper of her mind until the next day; for with all the activity of our post-office, and all the meritorious exertions of its excellent and indefatigable secretary, it has not yet been considered convenient (to say the least of it) to oblige one with an answer to letters sent a hundred miles, under some six-and-thirty hours, so that the impatient suitor—lover I can hardly call him—had nothing left for it, but to read and talk away time with Katherine, who, now she had established a sort of confederacy with him, referred with melancholy pleasure to the secret of her heart, in a manner which, had it been spoken of a day or two before, she would not have believed herself capable of adopting even towards *him*.

It was nearly three o'clock, on this day of anxious watchfulness, when a letter was brought to Edward, the superscription of which was evidently in the hand writing of Major Overall. The moment he saw it, it struck him to refer to some connexion or engagement entered into between the Major and Miss Epsworth, for he had so high an opinion of Moss's almost intuitive perception of human character, that contrary even to his own judgment he believed he should find the major eventually his rival. His surprise, however, may be better conceived than expressed, when he read the following :—

" —— Hotel,

" Tuesday, two o'clock.

" Dear Maxwell,

" If you will permit me still so to address you, for under all the circumstances and the correspondence which has taken place between you and Martha, there can be no doubt you are fully apprized by some means or other of what has taken place. The surprise is great—wonderful, extraordinary to *me*, and more striking than it could have been even to you ; but I can hardly think you will consider my conduct as amounting to a breach of confidence or friendship.

"When Martha received your appeal at the Inn at Charing Cross, it naturally overwhelmed her, for though her feelings are perhaps none of the finest, still her apprehension of consequences was terrible! wonderful! and knowing, the moment she saw your name, the circumstances of our friendship, she felt herself placed in a most awkward predicament, and, as she has since told me, thought it best to admit the whole of the facts at once; indeed if you had not so naturally,—I will say,—cut short the correspondence, she would have told you herself the reason of her being in town, together with the arrangements made for the elopement and marriage.

"I assure you, I am half afraid to hold out the olive branch lest you should reject it. The temptation was too great, and I have fallen. I regret greatly, that we should thus have clashed; but as I believe the young lady's affections were really and truly mine, that fact of itself will perhaps reconcile you to a loss, which after all you will not, I am sure, regret. My poor trembling bride dreads to meet you, or your father, or your sister, of whom she tells me she is even more afraid than of any other part of the family. Why she has

formed this opinion of Miss Kitty, I know not; however if you will accept the proffered hand, and meet *us* with your usual kindness and good nature, we shall be delighted to receive you, either to-day, or to-morrow about four o'clock, here, when I will introduce you in form to Mrs. Overall.

"We shall remain but a very short time in England. Martha's mother, who came up with her daughter, in the first instance had made every preparation for our reception, and we are surrounded with boxes and packages nearly chin high, but we shall be too happy to have a reconciliatory meeting as soon as possible, and a declaration of peace, although I have most unexpectedly stepped between you and the happiness you proposed for yourself.

"Pray come to me, or, if not, write a line, and believe me—

"Yours most truly,

"H. Overall."

"What a curious coincidence this is!" said Edward. "Only think, Kitty, the protector and now husband of my unknown wonder, is neither more nor less than our volatile major—this is always the case, he bragged like a French

count, and swore that he would marry nothing but a fortune, and now he has entangled himself for life with a poor girl, who as she told me herself has nothing upon earth she could call her own."

"Except her heart," said Kate—"and *that* she has given to that odious, conceited little creature, Overall."

"Martha Scrimshaw, and Major Overall!" exclaimed Edward. "To think that the prodigiously refined major—the most delicate, the most particular, the literary, the classical, the all-accomplished traveller, who has 'seen the world,' should be really united to the authoress of the letter which I had the honor to read in full divan! However, I must admit that she *is* beautiful, and so I'll e'en go visit them—the removal from the Golden Cross, to their present aristocratic hotel is judicious—but how will she refer to the meeting in the Park, to the thief-taker, and all that? and why could he have left her alone so long, and when did he come up from the Epsworths? I shall have a million questions to ask, with a determination to make no allusions, no, not even to the letter itself."

"Go, Edward, go and see them," said Kate, "and pray beg the young lady to dismiss all her

apprehensions about me. How she has imbibed her fears I cannot guess—the major must have described me to her as a vastly formidable person; but pray do you reassure her: if your father were at home we would of course invite them here; for after the intimacy of the major in this house, there can be no difficulty in offering them the little civilities of hospitality, during what he says will be their short stay in town."

"Well, Kate," said Edward, "after this never disbelieve in Moss's curious coincidences. I shall have, however, one laugh at Mousetrap—he always said Overall would marry for money—there we have him; but I'll lose no time—I'll be off—of course I shall be back to dress for dinner. I shall go nowhere into society till I hear from Jane—I think I may now make a confidant of the major, for since he is *hors de combat*, I may trust him with less reserve than heretofore."

And accordingly Edward Maxwell bent his steps to the hotel which contained the major and the beautiful *incognita*. He considered on his way to their residence how he should behave; he anticipated feeling no small degree of awkwardness in beholding in the bride of his friend, the recent object of his romantic search and

inquiry—still he resolved to be cool, and having rehearsed, as it were, some few common-place civilities, wherewith to open the campaign, he reached the door, entered it, and inquired for Major Overall's apartments. He was ushered up—announced—a sudden whisking of drapery, and an abrupt bang-to of an inner-door, proclaimed the rapid retreat of the timid lady.

"Ned, how are you?" said the major.

"As well as any man very much surprised can well be," said Edward.

"I thought you would be astonished," said the major; "however, depend upon it all's for the best—your discovery was very curious, astonishing, surprising. I should hardly have thought you would have remembered Martha's person after seeing her but once and for so short a time."

"Oh, I assure you, Overall," said Ned, "there are some people whose faces make a deeper impression in one interview than others are able to produce in years."

"And is Martha's one of those d'ye think?" said Overall, "for *my* part, I think her hideous, horrid, dreadful, abominable."

Edward was astonished at the major's *tirade* against his lady.

"I am afraid," continued Overall, "that a sly habit of taking what our friend, Mousetrap, calls the ginnums, has not a little contributed to destroy the personal appearance of the gentle Patty."

Edward's amazement here became immeasurable.

"I must go, however, and find my better half," said Overall: "she ran away the moment she heard you announced—for I do believe, even now—and I say it that shouldn't—if you had been only commonly attentive, her affections would never have wandered:—wait a moment. Oh, Ned, Ned," added the major, as he was leaving the room, "you have been wicked, bad, inconsiderate—eh—and the result, more your fault than my desert."

And so he repaired to his lady's chamber, leaving Maxwell very much in doubt whether what he had seen and heard could be real, or whether the major, like his bride, had not been indulging in a little of Mousetrap's "ginnums" before dinner. To be told that the girl was not handsome, when he himself had been ready to marry her for her beauty alone—to be told that she indulged in the use of strong liquors, and that if he, Ned, had only played his cards well,

he, the major, never would have obtained her hand; all this so completely mystified him, that his surprise and amazement were very little increased, when the door opened and exhibited Major Overall, leading in, as his bride and partner for life, the *ci-devant* Miss Jenny Epsworth, the intended wife of his thunder-stricken visitor.

"Jane!" exclaimed Edward.

"My dear cousin," cried the agitated Jenny, and before he was aware of what she was meditating, Edward felt himself clasped round the neck and wetted with either tears or *Eau de Cologne*, but which, in the confusion of the moment, he was quite unable to ascertain.

"What does all this mean?" said Edward, disengaging himself from the tender embrace of his faithless cousin, "did you get my letter, and have you thus rapidly arrived to answer it in person?"

"No letter, my dear cousin," said Jane, "my husband has got the letter you wrote to Scrimshaw. I feel it all—but I thought you neglected me—I thought myself abandoned, discarded—or else, I—"

"There, my dear Jane!" exclaimed the major, "you need not make so many excuses—

marrying *me* does not, according to my view of the case, require such great palliatives,—eh, wonderful, isn't it, Ned?"

"I really am so overcome by amazement," said Edward, "that I am unable to collect myself sufficiently to decide what course of conduct I ought, under the circumstances, to pursue—I came here to visit *you*, major, and your bride."

"And here she is, Ned," said the major, in the highest possible pitch of his voice, and with a corresponding attitude of exultation.

"Then where is Miss Scrimshaw?" inquired Edward.

"Scrimshaw, my dear Edward," said Miss Epsworth, "is *my* maid's mother, whom we sent on to town to wait for us to avert my aunt's suspicion, for she was so dreadfully averse from my marrying the major that—"

"Well, my dear girl," interrupted Overall, "there is no necessity, that I see, for dwelling upon an opposition which is so happily and fortunately overcome—it's absurd, ridiculous, coarse, low, unpleasant."

"Scrimshaw your maid's mother?" said Edward; "what at the Golden Cross, Charing Cross?"

"Exactly," said the major. "Jenny, as you must know, is timid, and never having been from under the shade of her aunt's wing, felt it would be more agreeable to her to have people about her whom she knew—so Scrimshaw was despatched to the Golden Cross, where you discovered her, and taxed her very naturally with a want of feeling towards *you*, and a disregard of your claim upon her young mistress."

"This," said Edward, "is confusion worse confounded—then you are not aware, Miss Epsworth, of a letter addressed to you by me yesterday?"

"Mrs. Overall, if you please, Ned," interrupted the major.

"Not I, Edward," said Jane: "what letter *do* you mean?"

"You had better return it unopened, Jane," said Edward, "and I think I had better retire from this most unexpected scene. I have been brought into contact unintentionally with a lady who has broken her faith, and a friend who has betrayed a confidence, and I—"

"But," said Jane, "you were aware of this before you came to us—you were aware that Scrimshaw was my maid's mother. You were aware of what was doing—"

"Not I, upon my honour," said Edward; "the whole thing has originated in a mistake."

"Mistake, Mr. Maxwell," said the heiress, bridling up; "then pray, Sir, if you were *not* aware of all these circumstances, will you allow me to ask whom you imagined Miss Scrimshaw to have been; and to what claims, and what feelings, and what consideration, you refer in the letter which you addressed to her at the Golden Cross? Here it is, Sir; and if you were ignorant of the business that brought that person to town, what business was it, that induced you to send such a letter, and receive an answer to it?"

Edward was, to use a nautical phrase, somewhat "taken aback," by this sudden squall.

"Come, come, Ned," said the major, "let's have no anger, you are caught in your own net. Jenny has regularly beat you—done—perfectly — thoroughly — completely — totally. Eh—who, as she says, 'did you think Miss Scrimshaw was' — eh — bravo—bravo, Signora Jenina."

Edward began to think he was cutting rather a sorry figure before the enraged Jane and her exulting little major; but all his present feelings were trivial, nothing, compared with his

anticipations of those to which he would be subjected, when his four-sider of devotion and adoration, despatched yesterday, came to Mrs. Overall's hands.

"I confess candidly," said he, "that I had *no* conception who Miss Scrimshaw was, when I addressed her; but I am perfectly confident that the circumstances, if explained, under which I wrote that letter, would completely exonerate me from the slightest impropriety."

"Very probable, Mr. Ned," said Mrs. Overall. "What does *this* passage in your letter mean, pray?—'That I have discovered you after all the precautions you have adopted, may prove to you at least that I am not to be baffled,'—pray, Ned, let me know, what does *that* mean?"

"Why, that means," said Edward, "that when I am resolved upon anything, I generally carry my point."

"What," continued Mrs. Overall, "do you mean by 'the attractions of beauty would have failed,' or what does the unreserved avowal of your name, residence, and circumstances mean?"

"Upon my life," said Edward, "I can stand no more cross-examination, and all I can beg you now to do, is to recollect that whatever

turn affairs may take in consequence of your marriage with the major, my being here is not to be considered as a matter of inclination or choice, and that I protest against my visit being construed into either an acknowledgment of your claims on Miss Epsworth, or an admission of *her* propriety or justice in attending to them. I leave you with no hostile feeling, but I must be understood merely to stand neuter, and that whatever civilities I may have proffered in my father's or my sister's name to the major and his lady, while ignorant of her character and condition, I must wait for a further consultation with my friends before they can be offered under the circumstances as they actually exist."

Saying which, Edward proceeded to the door. The major rang the bell, held out his hand to Edward, which he coolly declined; and bowing ceremoniously to the bride, the young man quitted the apartment. Before he had quite closed the door, or rather before the major had closed it upon him, Mrs. Overall leaped from her chair, and thrusting her head out into the passage, said:—

"And, Mr. Edward, when you call the great council of your friends, have the goodness to lay a copy of your letter to the supposed Miss Scrim-

shaw before them as the subject of their primary deliberation."

It would be quite impossible to describe the state of Mr. Edward Maxwell's mind as he retraced his steps to his father's house. The results of the deliberation in the "home department," we shall probably discover in the course of the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

" Stand not upon the order of your going,
" But go at once—"

SHAKSPEARE.

As I have just said, it would be very difficult, nay, perhaps impossible to describe Edward Maxwell's sensations when he regained the street; he felt in the midst of a whirlpool of contending passions and feelings; but amidst all the mortification, jealousy, anger, disappointment, and vexation, surprise the most unbounded, and astonishment the most unqualified, seemed to assail him most powerfully of all. His friend, the insignificant, vapouring dandy, whom he had himself taken down to the Epsworths to make a joke of, a butt of, a fool of,—that *he*, of all the people in the world, should have superseded and sup-

planted him in Jane's affections,—that *he* should have carried off the golden prize, was a blow which appeared irrecoverable; for although she was an object of something amounting almost to dislike, and certainly exceeding indifference to him, while he had her at his beck, secure and snug in the covert, ready, and only waiting his call to accompany him to the altar, now that he had lost her—just at the moment too in which he had resolved to take her,—now, he felt that he would rather have died than surrender her.

"If," thought he, "I had entirely discarded her—if I had married any one else, the case would have been different; but I had just determined to unite myself with her: and the worst part of the story is, that she herself must know that I had so determined; for the four sides crammed full of absurdities and protestations, will reach her by to-morrow's post, and all my affectation of indifference will go for nothing;—but, above all, if she had *not* married anybody else, I should not have cared one farthing for her rejection of *me*." In short, he saw nothing, heard nothing, understood nothing, until he reached home, save and except that through the darkness and confusion of his mind,

he caught one glimmering speck of light, in the consciousness that the illiterate being, whose letter he had received, was, after all, *not* the lovely creature for whom his heart was aching; and that to the trickery of Overall, and the fickleness of Jane, he was indebted for a discovery, upon which his future happiness or misery even yet so very much depended.

This, it must be admitted, was a redeeming consideration, at the moment, and there was even yet another circumstance which afforded him, in a minor degree, a little additional satisfaction. Perhaps the reader will anticipate what I mean —the absence of Mr. Godfrey Moss, the arch-tormentor of all deluded youths; whose raillery upon the subject of Ned's defeat by the major would have been hardly bearable. But even with these palliatives the young gentleman who had been taught to imagine that he had Miss Epsworth's affections entirely in his own possession, and thoroughly at his command, could hardly arrange his feelings so as to be ready immediately on his return to his father's, to explain the *dénouement* of the affair to his family.

He arrived. They had actually sat down to dinner. Who were there?—His father, his sister, and Apperton.—Any one else?—Miss O'Con-

nochie, and her brother; Mr. Salt, a merchant, and a Mr. Dabbs, a friend of Apperton's. What a very disagreeable circumstance: if he declined dining at home after his knock had been heard (for the surgeon dined in his front parlour, and the different knocks of the family, on the house door, were as familiar to the ears of the inmates as their faces were to their eyes), some inquiries would be made, and his absence would be attributed to rudeness, or perhaps illness; so resolving to seal up his thoughts and feelings hermetically for an hour or two, he entered the dinner-room, apologised for his lateness, ran up stairs for a few minutes to arrange his dress, and returned, making a profusion of excuses for his thoughtlessness, and asking permission of Miss O'Connochie and his sister, to dine in boots.

There can hardly occur anything much more unpleasant to a young man brim-full of a subject replete with interest and importance to himself, his heart and mind actually overflowing with discoveries and disappointments, than to find his lips luted by the presence of a party of strangers wholly and entirely unacquainted with the subject which occupies his thoughts; and who would be utterly indifferent to his agitation and excitement, even if they knew the

cause. Every word they uttered appeared to be drawled out with peculiar slowness; they ate more leisurely than they ever did before; the servants were less active in removing dishes and changing plates. The minutes he fancied drawn out into quarters of hours; and as for enjoying the conversation which appeared to Edward so needlessly and disagreeably to prolong the sitting, he might as well, and as advantageously to himself, have sat by the side of a murmuring stream, or have listened to the howling of the wind down a chimney. It seemed to his aching ears like one monotonous chaunt, wholly unintelligible as to its matter, and rather unpleasant in its sound.

Apperton was playing *croupier*, and Edward sat next to him, but he was sufficiently well acquainted with his brother-in-law, to know that however otherwise qualified for business or general society, he had not the faculty of taking a hint with dexterity, or of comprehending, except by a full, fair, and complete disclosure of facts and circumstances, anything a friend might wish to impart to him. To have mentioned Miss Epsworth's name, would have been to rouse the elder Maxwell's attention; he would have required an explanation, and have insisted upon

being let into the subject of conversation. To have whispered to Apperton the great cause of his mortification, the marriage of his betrothed with the major, would have been to produce from him some exclamation of wonder and surprise, which would necessarily have excited universal observation, and perhaps compelled him to a full confession of his sad defeat before the assembled party ; so, poor Edward was forced to endure and suffer all the agonies of restrained grief, and suppressed emotion, until a fitter season than the present, should arrive for unburthening his teeming heart.

The ladies sat longer after dinner than ever they had in their lives before, and when Kitty had hemmed once or twice, and Miss O'Connochie had put herself into the first position for moving, he saw them both return themselves to their chairs, upon the soft and good-natured appeal of his father, who said,—" Don't leave us yet, ladies," in a voice of melody, as discordant to *his* ears as the turning of a brazen candlestick, or a dry wheel grating on the axle-tree, neither of which would have set his teeth on edge half so dreadfully as the sweet tone of solicitation adopted by his respectable parent, to check the departure of his fair companions, and the dread-

fully agreeable compliance with his wish, which both the damsels expressed visibly by smiles, audibly by words, and practically by re-seating themselves at the table.

Mr. Salt and Mr. Dabbs, both strangers to Edward, now essayed (each in his peculiar way) to reward the ladies for their good nature, by relating certain stories concerning ghosts and spirits, all of which they had from undoubted authority; and even Apperton, who never much joined in general conversation, undertook to relate a "very curious thing," which he had heard from the clergyman of the parish, where it occurred in Somersetshire, of a murder having been discovered by the continued appearance of a vision in the shape of a young woman, who eventually led an old attorney to a blacksmith's door, close beside which, the body belonging to the said spectre was found buried with the throat cut. Thence imperceptibly the conversation was diverted to hanging, and a catalogue of crimes and punishments was rehearsed, which Edward thought would have lasted until midnight, and it might have done so, had not one of those venerable, infirm personages who at that period, slept during the night in upright boxes, and moved about occasionally in heavy great

coats, armed with lantherns and sticks for the protection and convenience of themselves; just as a new subject was started, cried, in a sonorous voice, while passing the windows of the house, "Half past nine!"

Amazement seized upon all the party; all, excepting Edward, thought it impossible it could be so late: he was astonished that it was not very much later; but late or early, certain it is that no watchman ever more suddenly or successfully dispersed a respectable party than the veteran of Burlington Gardens. The bell was rung, the ladies were roused, the beaux were on their legs; and Edward was, "door in hand," in less than a minute after the hollow sound had burst upon their ears; Miss O'Connochie, making what the players call an "effective exit," by entreating the gentlemen to show a reciprocal affection for the society of the ladies, by coming to them as soon as possible.

Miss O'Connochie was an Irish spinster, some five-and-thirty years of age, who, as it appeared by her conduct and conversation, would have had no objection to assume legally and properly the name of Dabbs or of Salt, or, indeed, the name of any other gentleman who might have been disposed to entitle her so to do.

At all events, Edward considered the main point carried. The men of the party were what is called, extremely polite, genteel men, and had, as they termed it, "a great admiration of the fair sex," and he therefore felt assured that they would not be long before they retired to the drawing-room. Maxwell, the elder, however, rang the bell for another bottle of wine, which was produced amidst the cries of "No more"—"Oh dear, no more wine!"—"Oh, Mr. Maxwell, we have had quite wine enough!" and in spite of all these declarations, finished in about a quarter of an hour, when tea and coffee being announced, the party broke up.

Edward and his father remained in the parlour—he could no longer retain his information, nor restrain his desire to make a confidence. He stated to the old gentleman the occurrences of the day—the treachery of Overall—the marriage of Jane, as well as his own mistake with regard to the imaginary Miss Scrimshaw. Again the servant came to announce the tea and coffee—but the sire and the son were still deeply engaged in deliberation, for it seemed to Edward that the old gentleman considered the loss of Miss Epsworth's fortune much more seriously than

he had expected. This delay brought to the council the kind-hearted Kate, who, constantly solicitous about her beloved parent, became alarmed, lest his absence from the drawing-room should be occasioned by illness.

The moment she was made acquainted with the history, she, who entered so warmly and feelingly into the interests and hopes of others, felt herself totally incapacitated from joining in the common-place conversation which was in progress up stairs, and the whole family, with the exception of Apperton, whom they expected every moment to arrive for the purpose of inquiring the cause of the general defection, were unanimously of opinion that nothing could be so dreadful as having to entertain their present visitors; Miss O'Connochie having before dinner announced that her pa and ma were dining somewhere in the city, and would send the carriage to fetch her after they had returned home.

Common civility, however, decided the movements of the family, and they agreed in the absolute necessity of facing their friends, and endeavouring as much as possible to divert their attention from the more serious affairs of the family during the stay of their company; and

accordingly they repaired *en masse* to the drawing-room, where they separated themselves amongst the groupe, and kept themselves purposely from any allusion or observation, each, however, while making the agreeable, *thinking* of no earthly subject but the one.

Maxwell, Dabbs, Salt, and Apperton, made up a rubber, which promised to engage them for some time; Maxwell, being one of the old school, a sportsman, who shot with a single barrelled gun, played billiards with the mace, and could not endure short whist.

Edward took a book into a corner of the back drawing-room, to affect to read; but he was very soon driven thence by the gentle and insinuating Miss Geraldine O'Connochie, who made herself particularly agreeable to him, by rallying him on being in love, and hoping his fair one was neither inconstant nor unkind.

Apperton interlarded his deals and tricks with a continued reference to Major Overall, whom he several times pronounced to be one of the cleverest little fellows he had ever met with, wondered where he was, and hoped he would be back in London before long.

Kate knew that nothing would so completely answer the double purpose of stopping

Miss O'Connochie's comicality, and gratify her vanity, as asking her to sing, which she accordingly did, and was rewarded for her civility by immediate compliance on the part of Geraldine, and two family looks, one from her father, who detested music while he was playing cards, and the other from Edward, who, bored as he was by the conversation of the young lady, would rather have endured any thing than her execution (taken in a legal sense) of Moore's melodies, which, although herself Irish, and professing to have heard the author himself perform them, she murdered with malice prepense, and aforethought, in the most hardened and unfeeling manner.

"*Il n'est si grand jour qui ne vienne à vêpre*," says the old French proverb, and with it, Edward endeavoured to console himself, reflecting like the Italian turnspit, (the Italian turnspits, Major Overall would swear were coherent animals,) that hard and uninteresting as his labour might be, the gigot would be roasted at last; and, distracted as Edward was, the reader must imagine, for I cannot attempt to describe the effects upon his patience, and the equanimity he either possessed or affected to possess, when after the last lingering guest but one had ac-

tually departed, (which departure, however, did not occur till past midnight,) Doctor and Mrs. O'Connochie were announced, and ushered into the drawing-room. They could not think of losing the opportunity of coming up to see dear Mr. Maxwell, when they called for their daughter, and who, now that they had dropped in just as the reduced party were enjoying that social and sociable repast, which, however basely and injudiciously decried in many families, was, as I have already said, observed and maintained with all its rights, privileges and immunities at the surgeon's, they could not resist partaking of it.

Mrs. O'Connochie was prevailed upon to take a glass of warm red wine and water, with a bit of sugar in it, and the worthy Doctor induced to take the thinnest possible slice of ham, just to "relish" one tumbler of gin punch which he had so frequently admired, whenever Godfrey Moss happened to be in town, and which the fair Katherine could not refuse to make after the so much approved fashion;—never, in short, were people so chatty, so conversible, and so pleasant, as upon the very night when their presence was purgatory to the whole family, whom they thought they were pleasing and delighting by their stay; and above all of

the agreeable people, was Mr. Dabbs, who had exhibited some amatory prepossession in favour of Miss Geraldine O'Connochie, and who was more facetious than he had ever been before in his life, especially on the subject of love and fidelity, the constancy of woman, and the deplorable state of the poor unfortunate devils who were sometimes jilted,—a misfortune which never could be qualified in his mind, if it was not made clear to him that the discarded lover had made his advances with interested views, and attacked the lady for her fortune's sake, and, then he was pleased to add, he thought it served the money-hunter right.

But Mr. Dabbs was kinder than could possibly be expected: he was so very good-natured as to stay even after the O'Connochies were gone, on purpose to praise the gentle Geraldine, and perhaps ascertain the amount of her fortune; for which purpose, and because he thought it civil to wait for, and walk city-wards with his friend and introducer, Apperton, he wiled away the time by making himself a second glass of hot brandy and water.

As this disposition to wait for Apperton was becoming more and more evident, and as it was thought right and proper by the Maxwells, if

not absolutely necessary, under the circumstances, to call the said Apperton, being the son-in-law elect, into their cabinet council, for the purpose of determining forthwith what course was to be pursued with respect to the major and his bride, Edward contrived to give him a hint that they wished to speak to him before he went off, and that he had better convey another hint of a similar nature to his very attentive friend, Mr. Dabbs. This he did with the greatest clumsiness imaginable, by telling him *totidem verbis* that he had better go, that it was getting very late, and that he need not wait for *him*, because he was wanted to discuss some family matters of great importance, which they could not talk over while *he* stayed.

This pure, generous, and unsophisticated avowal of the fact, reduced Mr. Dabbs to the necessity of swallowing the boiling potion he had recently made; his performance of which feat, since it was long before the exhibition of Monsieur Chabert at the Argyle Rooms, filled the surrounding spectators with wonder, and produced a sort of professional joke from Apperton, upon the rate of insurance taken for throats: it moreover filled the eyes of Mr. Dabbs with involuntary tears, wiping which,

and smarting under the scalding inflicted upon him by his extraordinary civility, he took his leave, apologizing for what he had been so candidly made to feel was the peculiarily tiresome length of his visit, at the same time gently reproaching his friend, for not having earlier in the evening told him that he was not going to accompany him in his walk homeward.

At length, however, the house was cleared, the servants ordered to bed, and the highly excited conclave assembled for the important discussion. The facts of the case were clearly and distinctly stated by Edward, and the question which immediately presented itself for debate, was, whether under the circumstances, Kate should visit the newly married lady on the following day, as the major had expressed a hope she would, or whether Jane's conduct had really been such as to justify a total separation from her and her husband, and an entire "cut," for ever after.

"The loss of the fortune," said Apperton, "is you see already definitively decided: not one per cent. of that, will be recovered by the quarrel; and therefore if Miss Epsworth has voluntarily married the major, I see no reason why enemies should be made, or dissensions

created amongst relations and connexions, by refusing to receive, or visit them."

"Much," said Edward, "depends, as far as I am concerned, upon the line of conduct Overall himself has observed in the progress of the affair—if Jane, as it seems from what I saw, and heard to-day to be extremely probable, has thrown herself into the arms of this man, even though he *is* my friend, I ought rather to rejoice than lament—but if—"

"Much of this, Ned," said Maxwell, "I am sure, and quite sure, too, that you will admit it, has arisen from your own conduct towards your cousin. You have not evinced any affectionate disposition towards her. Month after month, week after week, you have received invitations to the house—you have seldom or ever gone, unless it was in the way to some other and more agreeable engagement, and when you *have* paid your visits, they have been short and hurried. She must doubtlessly have felt this neglect, and it seems to me has acted upon the impulse of feelings, perhaps the strongest by which women are actuated."

"Well, my dear father," said Kate, "but surely Edward is not to be blamed for this shew of indifference if he felt it—the hypocritical

assumption of regard and esteem, without possessing them, is much more dishonourable than the candid, honest course he has pursued."

"Judging by that rule," said the elder Maxwell, "nothing then has occurred in the present marriage, which ought to excite either disappointment, or anger in any part of our family."

"No," said Edward, "nothing—only let it be recollected that before breakfast to-morrow Mrs. Overall will have the power and the pleasure of exhibiting to her husband four sides of my letter entirely filled with prospects of future happiness, founded on the very esteem and regard, which now it seems I was extremely right, and very honourable never to affect."

"Esteem and regard alone," said Maxwell, "are surely not the feelings upon which to marry."

Katherine's cheeks glowed crimson—she looked towards her father, who affecting not to have encountered her transient glance, continued, "For a young man of your character and disposition, something more than such rational views are necessary to enchain and hold you—and lamenting as I do, the loss of a connexion, which, in all other points, was very desirable,

I must say, that if she felt herself neglected, and if in consequence her affections leant another way, I do not regret her avowal and decision in favour of the object of those affections; for recollect what a struggle she would have made, if in compliance with the predestined arrangements of our families, she had given her hand to you, while her heart was another's."

This second exhibition of mental blindness to the paralled case actually in progress in his own family, and under his own eyes, had nearly thrown Kate off her guard; but such is human nature, and such its infirmities, that Maxwell, man of the world as he was, quick and penetrating as were his intellect and his judgment, was positively unconscious that he was arguing with all his power and ability against the very course he had himself pursued with respect to his much loved daughter, now actually sitting before him.

"The question must be decided to-night," said Edward, "for I believe they quit London for the Continent, to-morrow or the next day."

"I wonder who the major has letters of credit on," said Apperton; "do you happen to know who their bankers are?"

"Not I," said Edward, who could neither help smiling, nor looking at his sister.

"But, pray," said the elder Maxwell, "has her aunt been reconciled to the marriage?"

"Quite the contrary," said Edward; "the *young* folks seem quite in suspense, as to the line the old gentlewoman will take—but of course we shall hear from Dulham in the morning. I know that her aunt was so decidedly favourable to the completion of our engagement, that no power or persuasion would have induced her to consent to a deviation from it—hence the necessity for an elopement; for even though she should have changed her opinion with circumstances, it was quite out of the question after all her declarations that she should admit it."

"Yes: and I," said Kate, "have reason to know, that the old lady's warm and candid expressions of delight at the prospect of your marrying Jane, were amongst the horrors that kept you so much away from them."

"Well," said Maxwell, "my opinion is, that we had better wait for the arrival of the post to-morrow—let us see the view which the old lady takes of her niece's conduct, and how she explains her own share of the business, and the origin and course of the affair altogether; it will then be time enough for us to decide upon the line we shall adopt towards

her. I quite agree with Apperton, that continued animosities in families are dreadful; we are none of us perfect, and if our own relations and connexions will not make allowances for the infirmities of human nature, the indiscretions of youth, or the ill regulation of passion and feeling, who can we expect to view our errors with leniency?"

"Ditto, Sir, ditto," said Apperton. "The bargain is struck, the interests of the firm are consolidated, and I really think, that it will be to the advantage, and for the respectability of all parties, to give them credit in our accounts."

"Well, then; we delay our final decision till the morrow," said the elder Maxwell, "so get you to bed, Kate—you must not keep yourself awake, because you are disappointed of a companion in matrimony. If we had known all this, we need not have delayed your—"

"My dear father," said Kate,—"good-night, —Apperton, you will be here at breakfast—only think what an escape Edward has had, in the absence of poor dear Mr. Moss—how he would have triumphed in the fulfilment of his prophecy about the major and Jane Epsworth."

"I assure you," said Edward, "his being away has not been one of the least qualifications

of my distress upon the occasion, for by the time he comes back to open his batteries upon me, I shall have grown case-hardened and callous."

When Kate, having taken leave of the party, had retired, Edward, who felt that there was yet something on his part to do, and who doubted, whether instead of receiving the major amicably, (supposing the decision to take that turn,) he ought not under the circumstances to call him to account for conduct, which at present remained unexplained, and by which he had supplanted him in the affections of a young lady to whom he was actually engaged, and to whom it might naturally have been supposed he was devotedly attached; was about to open his heart upon his honourable scruples to his father and future brother-in-law; but considering the relationship, in which both those gentlemen stood to him, the affectionate kindness of the one, and very little experience in affairs of honour in the other, he resolved to conceal his feelings upon the point that night, and as early as might be, on the following morning take the opinion of a friend, who, during a life of active military service abroad, and of constant association with the best circles at home, had esta-

blished and maintained a high and unsullied character for decision and courage, tempered by sound discretion, and regulated by an intimate acquaintance with the usages of society—to him, unbiassed, and unprejudiced, as of course he was, Edward resolved to submit the circumstances of the case, satisfied that whatever the result might be, his honour would be safe in the hands of his friend, and that he should with greater comfort and satisfaction recur in after times to an affair, his conduct in which, had been conformable to the suggestions of one so competent to advise and direct.

Apperton's feelings were all engaged and interested in the actual loss of property, which was the natural consequence of Jane's infidelity, and Major Overall's marriage; and even Maxwell himself seemed, from the very first, more affected by that particular point of the business than any other. It was evident, now that the thing was settled, that he was anxious for a pacific conclusion to the affair, and for what is called "making the best of it," strengthening himself in that view by sundry proverbial axioms of his son-in-law, to the effect that, "what is done cannot be undone;" so that when the family of the Maxwells retired to

their rooms to rest, I can confidently say that the current of their thoughts set towards the pacific.

At breakfast they again assembled, little the better for their retirement the night before. New interest, and a new turn to affairs, however, were given by the arrival of the expected letter from Dulham, in which the old lady expressed her grief and sorrow at the event, consoling herself with the reflection that she was now aware of the safety of her poor niece, blaming her for a precipitancy so totally unexpected by her relations, and declaring her determination never again to see her, or pardon her conduct, unless the Maxwells generously set the example. She said that she of course possessed the feelings natural to her nearest living relation; but she also felt it her duty to the memory of her late brother, and to the character and feelings of his surviving connexions, to express and continue the manifestation of her entire disapprobation of a step, a connivance in, or an approbation of which on her part, she should have considered most dishonourable and improper. The letter contained a lengthened, and evidently sincere vindication of herself from any participation in Jane's misconduct, and a fervent expression of her entire ignorance and

want of suspicion of the meditated elopement. She was aware that Scrimshaw, the mother of Jane's maid, had left the neighbourhood, and once was surprised by finding her niece apparently interested in that person's journey to London; but knowing that she had always been a favourite dependent of her's, she saw nothing particularly to excite her attention, little thinking that this faithful envoy was in the pay of the major, and sent forward to prepare accommodations, and make purchases for her dear young lady, and her volatile little husband.

"Scrimshaw!" exclaimed the elder Maxwell, when he heard the last paragraph of the old lady's letter read. "Why, Ned, you seem to have been doubly unfortunate—was not Scrimshaw herself the beautiful creature whom you followed and hunted, after having saved her life in Long Acre?"

"That was *my* error," said Edward; "in pursuing the beauty, I hit upon the soubrette —by some pantomimic trick my lovely *incognita* contrived, as it now appears, to escape me, and having been thrown upon a wrong scent—"

"—You shot at a pigeon and killed a crow," said Apperton; "and *I* think, Master Edward,

if you had never seen that beautiful creature, as you fancy her, the chances are that Jane would not now be Mrs. Overall."

"Oh, never mind thinking of what is past," said Kate, anxious to soothe and conciliate; "it is quite clear, as far as Mrs. Epsworth is concerned, that she is no party to the run-away marriage, therefore she stands clearly exonerated. She says she knows their place of residence, but that she has not written to her daughter, although she has forwarded a letter, she thinks from Edward, to the hotel where they are,—this is perfect candour; and above all, she makes our reconciliation to the bride and bridegroom a condition of *her* forgiveness. Now the question is, can we under such circumstances withhold our pardon, seeing that it involves the separation of two such near and dear relations."

"As for me," said Edward, "I am prepared to do any thing that is fair and just towards Jane, upon the conviction which I have no hesitation in avowing, that whatever other consideration might have weighed with our families, my heart never was much concerned in the matter; but there is something due, I think, to my personal character in the affair, and I cannot

consent at the outset of my life, tamely to submit to the exhibition of a friend, in the character of a rival, without at least obtaining an explanation of the circumstances under which I have been supplanted."

"My dear Edward,"—said Maxwell.

What more he would have said, it is not possible for me to record, seeing that the arrival of a servant, armed with a large pacquet, stopped the current of the old gentleman's speech—it came from Major and Mrs. Overall—and was directed to Miss Maxwell. The unexpected arrival of this flag of truce suspended not only hostilities, but debate.

Katherine broke open the pacquet—it contained a letter addressed to herself, and a somewhat larger one directed to her brother. She handed it to Edward, who, with a trembling hand, rapidly tore asunder the envelope. It contained his own last letter to Jane, and the following lines from the young lady herself.

"Dear Edward,

"Enclosed is the letter to which you alluded when you visited us at our hotel yesterday. The character in which it is possible you may have addressed it to me, is one from which I ought

not now to receive any communication; besides, it is directed to Miss Epsworth, and that *not being my name*, I do not feel justified in opening what was meant for *another person*. I have written at length to your sister; she will, I dare say, shew you the letter, as I have desired her to do so; when she *has*, you will perhaps judge more leniently of *my* conduct than you are yet prepared to do, and at all events more favourably of the conduct of others who are dear to her who most sincerely subscribes herself,

"Your faithful friend,

"And affectionate cousin,

"JANE OVERALL."

"A perfect angel!" exclaimed Edward, "I never thought she could be half so amiable. Here is my letter unseen, unopened, unlaughed at: one thing is certain, she could not have acted in this manner without, at least, the assent of her husband."

"I must say, as far as it yet appears," said the elder Maxwell, "the girl has behaved most honourably."

"But she cannot give back any of her money," said Apperton.

"And therefore," said Kate, "it is useless our talking about it. Here is her letter."

Kate read as follows:—

"My Dear Katherine,

"I am not certain whether under the very peculiar circumstances in which I have placed myself, and the very decided step I have taken, I should have had courage to address one, who with the affection which I know she entertains for her brother, might possibly, nay, must feel herself wounded and offended by me. But his accidental visit—as it turned out to be—to *me* in the character of his friend's bride, and the receipt of the letter which I have herewith returned him, compel me to avail myself of the only opportunity I may have of palliating what I am conscious must be annoying and distressing; and justifying as much as possible, conduct, which at first sight may not only involve me in a charge of duplicity, and fickleness, but implicate another in a still more serious charge of deceit and treachery to a friend.

"As disguise or concealment must be now unavailing, I shall merely throw myself upon your candour and impartiality to recall the conduct of your brother towards me during the last year or two; and I do this not for the purpose

of impugning his taste, or of reproaching him for his neglect, but merely to bring to your recollection the fact, that having been considered in *my* family, and in yours, as his affianced wife, he has, during a period of two years, passed altogether eleven days at Dulham, and those at different and divided times, and generally on his way to other places and other engagements. Whenever he has been here, his manner, although perfectly civil and good-natured, never exhibited any of those signs which would be the natural result of a warm and affectionate feeling; and I might almost go the length of saying, without reflecting harshly upon any of his venial foibles, that more than once I have perceived myself to be rather an object for his amusement than of his regard.

"It may be that the very security he felt of possessing me—in short, of commanding me—might have induced the indifference, which, if I never complained of it, I sincerely assure you I have severely felt; but which most certainly would never have been spoken of by me, except in vindication of a partiality which I have no shame now in admitting for my present husband. His conduct to me has ever been warm and affectionate. I am not to

be told, Katherine, that I am deficient in some of those attractions which distinguish many other young women, but it may serve as some excuse for my conduct to say, that Edward's obvious conviction of my inferiority, was a death blow to my happiness and comfort, not because it conveyed to my mind the knowledge of my own imperfections, but because it convinced me how low I stood in his esteem, and how much more our marriage would on his part be a matter of duty than of inclination.

"People who have visited us, and Edward, even Edward himself, have formed a wrong estimate of my judgment and perception; they have thought that when they were pouring the most fulsome flattery into my ears, they could blind my eyes, and that the evidence of my looking-glass, was to be entirely overthrown by their eloquent eulogiums upon my personal charms. They, and he, were very much mistaken; and my fate may serve as a warning to those witlings who pique themselves upon making what they call a 'butt' of any unfortunate young woman, who, too proud to acknowledge the pangs she feels, and too well-bred to be angry, submits to the raillery she

cannot fail to understand, with a smiling countenance and an aching heart.

"Edward is to see this letter—he must see this pasage—it is better he should, for though I place him high above those who ordinarily practise the art of 'irony,' in the way I describe, I have received even from his lips, and the supercilious smile which curled them, torture which I have struggled with greater torture to conceal.

"These convictions then, sufficed to assure me, as I have just said, that if Edward eventually fulfilled the intentions of our families, it would be either as a compulsory measure, or a cold compliance with the inclinations of others; and I confess I so plainly felt that he had himself so much loosened the chain by which I was bound to him, that I doubted whether its total abandonment would not rid him of a disagreeable responsibility. That I was not very wrong, the circumstance which induced him to address old Mrs. Scrimshaw, in a tone of adoration, which she, poor matter-of-fact-body, did not comprehend, and throw himself at her feet *by mistake*, is a somewhat satisfactory proof. It is true, this affair was not known to me until after

I had decided on my plans, but it is to me something very like a corroboration of all my feelings and expectations on the subject.

" I have little left to add, but that little is of great importance, since between man and man such matters should be always clearly explained, —I mean the part which Major Overall has taken in the business. Throughout the whole of my acquaintance with him,—the theme of his praise, and the object of his admiration has been Edward. It was I myself who, with great difficulty, induced him to believe in his indifference for me: he referred constantly to our engagement, and never breathed a thought which could tend to weaken its importance and validity. In whatever has happened, I alone am to blame; for even with all his devoted affection for me, he never ventured to disclose his real views and object, until I had voluntarily and explicitly declared not only my conviction that I was disagreeable to your brother, but my firm determination never to ally myself by marriage to your family, on the terms upon which Edward alone seemed inclined to receive me. All that I beg on this point is, that you will clearly and distinctly understand that Major Overall's conduct throughout has been as equally regulated

by a jealous sense of honour towards Edward, as by an affectionate regard and esteem for me.

"I have only to say that if we are to meet again before our departure for the continent, I shall most happily and gladly hail our re-union. Upon your decision, I am given to understand by an emissary from Dulham, depends the forgiveness of my dear aunt. I will not so far impose upon your kindness as to make that a plea in my favour with you and your family, but a reconciliation with all of you, and above all with her, are the only things now wanting to complete my happiness and comfort. Her blessing, and your smiles, will be invaluable to me—they depend on each other; and if I can restore my husband to Edward's friendship, keeping too a share of it for myself, a heavy weight will be removed from my heart, and I shall truly and sincerely subscribe myself,

"Your happy and affectionate friend,

"JANE OVERALL."

"The thing is settled," said old Maxwell; "the girl is a girl of sense, she has shown herself not the silly, demented creature, that Mousetrap set her down for; she has exhibited intellect and spirit, good sense and good feeling; and all I

can say, is, I hope, Mr. Ned, you'll make as good a match somewhere else."

"I think there will be no fight after this," said Edward.

"Fight!" cried Katherine, to whom this was exhibiting a new view of the subject; "Heaven forbid!"

"I think the thing is uncommon handsome, altogether," said Apperton.

"I am afraid I have been blinded by prejudice," said Edward, "and talked out my right feelings; however, that's past: and as far as I am concerned, I am ready this moment to accompany Kitty to call on them, or to be the bearer of an invitation here."

"Then take the carriage this moment," said Maxwell, "it is at the door, go — meet the reconciliation half-way — and that will be doing it well—bring them here, and let us have a happy meeting — I hate bearing malice."

"I never saw less disposition to maliciousness, in my life," said Kate. "Well, Edward, will you accept the mission?"

"With all my heart," said Edward; "only I trust I shall escape much questioning about Miss Scrimshaw's letter; I declare if Moss

were in town, I would abscond at once—*there*, I must say, my fair friend hits me hard."

"And yet only sufficiently to shew her power," said Kate: "she does not dwell upon disagreeables; so now hurry away with you, and we will arrange our scattered spirits."

"It will be an odd sensation too," said Edward, "to—"

"Hang sensations," said his father; "be assured you are doing what is right, and put all the awkwardness out of the question: so, away with you."

"And Ned," said Apperton, "if you should happen to hear that the major wants any thing in my way, just speak a good word for your brother-in-law."

"Oh! depend upon me," said Edward, who in a few minutes drove off in the carriage, for the hotel of his honourable, happy rival.

"His brother-in-law!" the words grated upon the ears of Kitty most discordantly; the dissolution of Edward's engagement with Jane, would, three days before, have appeared to her a thing infinitely more improbable, than the breaking off of her's with Apperton. It is sad to say, that these thoughts were not unaccompanied by a wish — but why betray the

secrets of my heroine?—if heroine a reasonable, well-bred, amiable, quiet young lady, in Burlington Gardens, may be called.

Edward drove to the hotel, found the happy couple engaged in all the intricacies of patterns, which manufacturers and milliners were displaying to their eager eyes. His appearance of course proclaimed the result of the family council. Jane ran towards him, when he entered the apartment, and a kiss on her cheek and a shake of her husband's hand, ratified the treaty of peace, of which the preliminaries had been signed half-an-hour before. There was no delay in her acceptance of a seat in the carriage, and while she was preparing for the excursion, the rivals entered into a familiar conversation, not without allusions to the great event; even jokes displayed themselves in the dialogue, which proved that all animosity was gone, and friendship was again happily restored.

Jane speedily re-appeared, looking, as Edward thought, better than she ever had looked before, and almost pretty; but fearful lest he should incur the imputation of "heart-breaking raillery," he held his tongue, and handed her silently into the carriage; the major followed, and just as

Edward had set his foot upon the lower step, his eye was suddenly attracted by a passing female in deep mourning.

It was his mysterious beauty—he could not recede—he could not stop—he entered the carriage—the steps were clapped up, and the door banged too by the footman, and the horses were off in an instant. The mysterious beauty had vanished.

CHAPTER VIII.

"We have a trifling foolish banquet towards."

SHAKSPEARE.

LET the reader, if he have one spark of sympathy for Edward Maxwell, just think of his feelings at this moment; wedged into a carriage with a successful rival and a jilting mistress, and beholding again, and perhaps for the last time, the being about whom, in all the world, he was the most interested, and who had (unconsciously to be sure,) in the first instance, put the final seal to his determination not to fulfil his engagements with his betrothed, and whose supposed ignorance and vulgarity, in the second place, had driven him to renew his suit, just at the very moment when the young lady had taken the most serious and effectual method of preventing its favourable issue.

Both the bride and bridegroom saw his confusion.

"A beautiful girl, by Jove," said the major. "Exquisite — Italian eyes — Grecian nose—eh—sublime—Jove—fine—delicious."

"So Edward seems to think," said Jane; "this is not your Miss Scrimshaw, is it?"

Never came a more mortal shot from deadly weapon, than this too admirable guess.

"No," stammered Edward, "no, not exactly."

"Oh, I dare say, *she* is something superlative," said Jane.

"Come, Jane, come," said her husband, with a look, the like of which she had never seen while he was her lover, "peace is declared—let's have no skirmishing."

This little dialogue might have been carried on in Hebrew or Sanscrit, instead of English, as far as poor Edward Maxwell was concerned. He had seen her; she was gone; she yet dwelt upon his sight, and on his mind's eye was indelibly engraven. An attempt to break into a conversation, was useless: the very effort, mingled with the consciousness that it *was* an effort, defeated itself, and he gave it up; he found he could not rally; so pending this awful silence, the major and his lady exchanged the most affectionate glances, and the major laid his

hand upon her's and patted it kindly and encouragingly, and then she withdrew it frowning and coquettishly, and looked at Edward, as if to warn her over gallant husband of the indecorum of his undisguised attentions to a wife, and the danger of her cousin's satirical remarks hereafter. Edward, however, still remained buried in thought, and sick at heart, that he should again have lost the opportunity, perhaps the last he ever might have, of enforcing his suit with the lovely "vision."

The first event which aroused him from the reverie into which he had fallen, and which it is but fair to imagine (even if I did not know the fact), Jane flattered herself was entirely occasioned by the sight of her happiness and that of the Major, was their arrival at Maxwell's door. The sound of the knocker flurried the bride, who had always felt an inferiority in the presence of Katherine, not only on account of her character and accomplishments, but on the score of age (for the start of three or four years in early life is never quite made up in after times), and she accordingly breathed quicker, and looked at her spouse, and then at Edward, who, in handing her from the carriage, felt not only the friendly pressure of the hand

he once expected to make his own, but an actual trembling, which announced that real timidity and apprehension of the approaching interview with his sister, had some share in the tumult so visible in his cousin's manner and appearance; a fact for which, in the present temper of his mind, Edward could not, without this practical evidence, have given Mrs. Overall credit.

The scene when she met Katherine in the drawing-room, is beyond my power of description; she shed floods of tears, hid her face in her fair friend's bosom, clung round her, and performed a certain number of hysterical evolutions; while Edward walked to the window, totally engrossed with the thoughts of his dulcinea; old Maxwell held Jane's hand, and patted the palm of it, and the Major murmured *sotto voce*, "Sensible—delicate—amiable—charming—affectionate—kind—good," and other words of similar import, always beginning his eulogies at the superlative point, and dropping, as if from the exhaustion of his eloquence, into the very bathos of commonplace commendation.

Time, and a tumbler of cold water, brought the tender creature round; but she was not yet sufficiently recovered to bear a general conversation, and accordingly she and Katherine re-

tired to the boudoir of the latter, where she detailed all the circumstances by which she had been induced to take so decisive a step; and argued the matter in the spirit of her conciliatory letter so effectually, that Kate, who was, in fact, the most strongly prejudiced of all the family against her, became a convert; while the major, in his very candid explanations to the two Maxwells, succeeded equally well in clearing himself from any imputation of treachery or deceit, and before three o'clock the whole party were as perfectly reconciled to circumstances and to each other, as the most sanguine peace-maker in Christendom could have hoped to see them. Letters were despatched to old Mrs. Epsworth, begging her to transport herself forthwith to town, to join the happy group; and if she did not feel inclined to accompany the new married people to the continent (which Overall was perfectly resolved she should *not*), at least sanction by her presence in the metropolis, the approaching nuptials of Apperton and Kate.

In the midst of this general consolidation of interests, as Apperton called it, there were two hearts that gladdened not—neither Edward nor Kate could command their spirits; no, not even their countenances, so as to fashion them

into mirth. Edward's ardent and romantic devotion to the *ignis fatuus* which haunted him, wholly unfitted him for any ordinary enjoyments, or an association with those who pronounced themselves (as all newly-married people do), the happiest creatures upon the face of the earth; and as for Kate, holding, as she did, Major Overall in something very like contempt, despising his vanity, and laughing heartily at his affectation, *she* could not see the entire and complete satisfaction which he and his bride exhibited, and the enthusiastic manner in which the one spoke of what they *would* do in Italy, and the other talked of what she should see, and how they should live, without casting a look at the cool, collected, red and white countenance of her future husband; the phlegmatic contempt which characterized it, while he heard the major scream his admiration of the bright skies of Italia, and the classical recollections of the eternal city; and anticipating, in her mind, the years of common-place which she had doomed herself to pass, in the society of an individual for whom, whatever her esteem might be, she never *could* feel that enthusiasm which she once imagined the indispensable ingredient of happiness in married life.

Edward certainly had the better bargain of the two ; for, in the first place, he was uncertain only as to what he might gain ; in the second place, his loss was decided and ascertained : and now that he had again seen his adored, and seen her under the conviction that she was neither Miss Scrimshaw nor the illiterate authoress of the letter he had received, he had nothing to do but to hope and look forward. Kate had only to look backward and dread ; however, the choice had been her own, she had played her own game, and the die was cast.

The elder Maxwell, after a certain time had been expended in conversation, thought, since the young couple did not blink the gaze of their friends in the morning, that perhaps, when it was later and darker, they might be disposed to partake of the family dinner. This, however, was impossible, for the major had promised to dine with his man of business, Mr. Palmer ; and Mrs. Palmer, who was a very kind, good sort of creature, had suggested that the bride should not be left alone ; that they would make her as comfortable as if she was at home ; and knowing all the history of the case, she could feel no difficulty in going there, and so on ; and therefore, it had been settled that

the happy couple should take their food at half-past five o'clock, at Mr. P.'s, his residence being located in Hunter-street, Brunswick-square; a part of our island which is bounded on the north by Barnet, on the south by Holborn, on the west by Burton-crescent, and on the east by Gray's Inn-lane.

Jane, now she had conciliated Kate, would very much have preferred passing the rest of the day and the evening with her; and was very anxious, recently as she had been married, that her husband should go and transact his business with Mr. P., as he called him, and make her excuses to Mrs. P.; but he frowned and shook his head, and said that they had prepared for their reception, and it would be a sad disappointment to P., and Mrs. P., and all the P.'s, if Jane did not go according to her promise, to fulfil an engagement which he had prudentially made, and she had gladly accepted, at a period when their entire reconciliation with the Maxwells, if even possible, was not considered probable.

The critics who have favoured the predecessors of this tale with their notice, have been pleased to censure and ridicule the frequent recurrence in their pages to the dinners of the characters engaged, and the minute descriptions

of the little peculiarities thereupon attendant. These discussions, however much found fault with, I beg to defend; inasmuch as England is a dining nation, and her people a dining people —as, indeed, Voltaire (no mean authority), said long ago. What is there in the way of shew, of ceremony, of association, of charity, of pleasure, of conviviality, of business, in England, which is unaccompanied by a dinner? The coronation itself concludes with a dinner— Is not the King's speech first promulgated to the members of either house of parliament after dinner? — can vestries transact parish business without dining?—with high and low, with great and small, eating is the soul and spirit of English society.

Who that had not dined, and swallowed wine enough to digest his dinner, could make the speeches which we see reported as having been delivered at tavern meetings? Why did Sir George Saville himself, after attending Crown and Anchor banquets for years, in furtherance of his great passion for freedom, at length grow so disgusted with the undivided application of his colleagues and followers to those periodical feastings, as at last to declare it his opinion, that since they eat so much

and did so little in the cause, they ought, instead of supporters of the bill of rights, to be called supporters of the bill of fare?

What would be my Lord Mayor's shew, if it were not for the dinner? The dinner is the sugar after the physic; nay, the propensity is not confined to human beings in the metropolis, nor to the mere pleasure of eating—the delight of seeing others eat is characteristic of a true Briton, and accordingly we find the galleries of tavern-rooms crammed with the spectators of dinners, and find that at Pidcock's Menagerie an extra sixpence is charged for leave to look at the lions while they are feeding; in short, Life in London would be a dull work unless illustrated with *plates*.

If this be the case, how shall a man attempt to describe London life, or life any where in England as it is, without talking of dinners: follow the banker or the merchant into his smokey shop, or accompting-house, in some narrow lane in the city—there he is, in his dimly lighted den, hovering about with a pen behind his ear, pale and wan, like the wax-work in Westminster Abbey, dead and dressed; at half-past seven see him dining, the bright lights reflected from the shining dishes, his pallid coun-

tenance is absolutely illuminated, and joke and jest flow from his lips while he sits and enjoys his *entrée*, and sips his sillery. Look at the wholesale trader, gloomy in his ware-houses, cursing tallow for being dull, praying that saltpetre may look up, or that madder may be quoted as per last; what is he at dinner-time? he flings tallow and care behind him; saltpetre and madder never enter his head; he is all smiles and good nature, and looks, by ten o'clock at night, as if he would lend his neighbour a hundred pounds to save him from hanging—next morning the tallow and the madder prevail again, and he is as dull and disagreeable as ever.

The lover who is making the amiable, flies to dinner, and sits either near or opposite to her in whom all his hopes and wishes centre; the look unseen, the remark unheard by any save themselves, are all given and taken so well at dinner; a smile or a good wish comes conveyed in a glass of wine; and, an offer itself sometimes explodes with a detonating motto.

See the farmer strike his bargains over fat bacon and cabbage. Mark the tradesman coming into his shop from his parlour, smelling of onions, and chewing, as he comes, the tough mutton which he as yet has scarce had time to

swallow. Go to the assizes—watch the care with which the judges' dinners are served, so as not to interfere with the condemnation of culprits or the convenience of jurors! In short, for where could we stop? eating is the universal employment of our countrymen, and as has been before observed, so much time is devoted to the operation, and occupied by it, and it is, in fact, so vitally interwoven with English society, that to give any thing like a faithful sketch of passing events, dinners must be served up on paper as well as in parlours.

What does that most admirable traveller, Fynes Moyrson, say in his interesting Itinerary? he says, "That one of the most important duties of all tourists is to observe the plenty of fishes or flesh, the kinds of meat or drink, with the sauces, and rare manner of dressing it." And one of the most curious parts of his narrative consists of these very descriptions. The reader shall judge for himself, taking it into consideration, that Fynes Moyrson's book was published in the year of our Lord 1617.

He tells us "that the diet of the Germans is simple and very modest, if you set aside their intemperate drinking; they commonly serve to the table sour cabbages, which they call *craut*,

and beer, or wine (for a dainty) boiled with bread, which they call *swoope*. They use," says he, "many sauces, and commonly sharp, and such as comfort the stomach, offended with excessive drinking; for which cause in Upper Germany, the first draught is commonly of wormwood wine, and the first dish of little lampreys, (which they call nine auger, as having nine eyes,) served with white vinegar, and them that take any journey commonly in the morning take a little brant wein, (that is their *aqua vitæ*,) and eat a piece of pliffer kerchen, (that is gingerbread;) and as they have abundance of fresh fish in their ponds and rivers, so they desire not to eat them unless they see them alive in the kitchen; and they prepare the same very savourily, commonly using aniseeds for that purpose, especially the little fish, whereof they have one most delicate kind, called smerling, which in Prussen I did eat, first choked, then sodden in wine, and they being very little, yet sixty of them sold for nineteen *grosh*."

"At Leipsic," says Moyrson, "for *mere curiosity*, I procured myself to be invited to a marriage feast in one of the chief citizen's houses. The marriage was in the afternoon, and at supper they served in a piece of roasted

beef hot, and another cold, with a sauce made with sugar and sweet wine ; they then served in a carp, fried, then mutton roasted, then dried pears, prepared with butter and cinnamon, and therewith a piece of broiled salmon, then bloated herrings, broiled, and lastly, a kind of bread like our fritters, save that is made in long rolls and more dry, which they call *fastnach kuchen*, that is, Shrovetide baking," together with cheese ; " and then," adds Fynes, with a sort of sorrowful reproach, " thus with seven dishes was a senator's nuptial feast ended, without any flocks of fowl or change of fishes, or banquetting stuff which other nations use, only was endless drinking."

" Whole barrels of wine, (bushels of apples, pooh, pooh,) were brought into the stove and set by us on a table, which was so placed, as, after two hours, no man in the company was in case to give account next morning what he did, said, or saw after that time. To nourish this drinking they used to eat salt meats, which being (upon ill disposition of my body) once displeasing and unwholesome for me, and I complaining thereof to my host, he, between jest and earnest, replied that the use of salt was commended in Scripture, alleging that text;

"Let all your speeches be seasoned with salt," and then, said he, "much more should our meats be thus seasoned." Salt thus pleasureth their pallet, because it makes the same dry and provokes the appetite of drinking. For which cause also, when they meet to drink, as they dine with dried pork and beef heavily salted, together with cheese, sharp like that of Parma, so when the cloth is taken away, they have set before them raw beans, water-nuts, (which I did see only in Saxony,) and a loaf of bread cut into shives, all sprinkled with salt and pepper; the least bit whereof will invite him to drink that has least need."

Whether this quaintness of Fynes Moyrson, which I confess, I think almost as delightful as that of Pepys himself, may be as entertaining to others as it is to me, I cannot pretend to say; but such an author dilating upon dinners is incalculably amusing—his account of the attachment of the Germans to their pigs, I cannot find it in my heart to omit in this place.

"To say truth," says Fynes, "pork dried, or bacon, is so esteemed of the Germans, as they seem to have much greater care of their hogs than of their sheep or other cattle, for in the morning when they turn them forth, they

scratch them with their fingers, *as barbers do men's heads*, and bless them that they may safely return; and in the evening when they are to come back with the herd, a servant is commanded to attend them, who washeth the dust from them as they pass by the fountain."

Moyrson, in fact, characterizes all the nations he visits as I would fain do, classifying the different grades of society, by their fare and food, and their modes of dressing and eating it. The Italians, the light-hearted, sweet-voiced Italians, he paints as rejecting with horror all the *cochonneries* of Germany. "Their tables," says he, "are spread with white cloths and flowers, and fig-leaves, with ingestars, or glasses of divers coloured wines set upon them; at the latter they touch no meat with the hand, but with a fork of silver or other metal, each man being served with his fork, a spoon, and a glass to drink." This expression of agreeable surprise, on the part of the observant Fynes, fully corroborates the history of Furcifer Coryat and his friend Whittaker, and only proves that the exquisite Sir Philip Sydney, and the accomplished queen, his mistress, sympathetically tugged at their rump steak breakfasts with their fingers; and that Sir Christopher Hatton, "so

remarkable for turning out his toes," has many a time and oft, played "pully hauly" with a maid of honour, at a tough leg of mutton in the royal palace. Conceive the delicate, amiable, persecuted Royal Mary, Queen of Scots, in her lonely loveliness, eating with her fingers her last steak, the day before she received her last chop.

But Moyrson explains how it is possible to eat with a fork; for he says, "as they serve small pieces of flesh, and whole joints *as with us*, so their pieces are cut up into small bits *to be taken up* with the fork, and they seethe the flesh till it be very tender. They use no spits to roast meat, and feed much upon little fishes and flesh, cut and fried with oil."

All this Major Overall would have enjoyed, since it was one of his wonderful, magnificent, astonishing, curious boasts, that at Florence, he could scoop more comfort out of five hundred a year, than he could in London out of as many thousands—a carriage and servants, a suite of apartments, with marble floors and columns, an opera box, and sallad, and macaroni for the whole season, served as well as at the table of his Eminence with the red stockings, whose

little black-eyed *niece* was so particularly partial to him.

"The French," says Moyrson, "are said to excel others in boiled meat, sauces, and made dishes, vulgarly called '*quelques choses.*'" Kickshaws, I presume, was the *proper* word—but says Fynes, "in *my* opinion the larding of their meat is not commendable, whereby they take away all variety of taste, making all meats savour of pork, and the French alone delight in mortified meats—they use not much whole meats, nor have I tasted there any good butter, which our ambassadors caused to be brought with them, out of England."

"By the way," he says, "in Saxony, they have no butter. but use in the stead thereof, a certain white matter called smalts." "The French," he adds, "dine most with sodden and liquid meats, and sup with roasted meats, each having his several sauce."

"As in all things," says he, "the French are cheerful, and nimble, so the Italians observe, that they eat or swallow their meat swiftly, and add, that they are also slovenly at meat, but I would rather say they are negligent, or careless, and little curious in their feeding. And to this

purpose I remember an accident, that happened to a Frenchman, eating with us at the master's table, in a Venetian vessel governed by Greeks, and sailing from Venice to Jerusalem, who *turning his foul trencher, to lay meat on the clean side,* did so offend the master, and all mariners, as well the best as common sort, as they hardly refrained from offering him violence."

Moyrson speaks of the peculiar luxury of clean sheets at an inn in France, and observes, moreover, that in the confines of Flanders, every passenger has a *glass to himself*, "for," says he, "the French are curious not to drink in another man's cup;" and he further adds, that it is an understood thing, that if you are at an inn where the landlord gives clean sheets, you are to dine at his house always—but even then he says the chambers have generally three or four beds, and these never tenanted by one traveller—With bells to ring for servants, Moyrson is quite fascinated,—in short, he is so delightful in his innocence, and so instructive in his minuteness, that I could go on quoting as long as I could sit reading him; but I beg pardon for this digression, which is attributable first, to my affection

for Fynes, and secondly, to the gratification I felt in finding so clever a man, considering the table the test of society. This, however, being the case, and eating as common to every human being as his mouth, it is clear the modes and manners of performing that necessary operation, must vary about as much, and, as I take it, are as indicative, and characteristic of the different classes of society, as Mr. Deville the lamp-maker tells us lumps and bumps are, under other circumstances. The kitchen evinces a greater difference of rank than the drawing-room, and in giving the strong outline of a family, a much more clear and decided opinion may be formed of their manners and qualities by a sketch of their dinner-table, than of any other part of the *menage*.

I have said this much to shew, that in a family like Mr. Palmer's, the non-arrival of the "company" would have been a severe disappointment. Mrs. Overall was known to be a lady of fortune, used to everything "nice and comfortable;" she kept her own carriage, her men servants and all that: and therefore they must be very particular, and have everything uncommonly nice for *her*—and so Miss Palmer, the night before, had a white bason of hot

water up into the parlour to bleach almonds, with which to stick a "tipsy cake," after the fashion of a hedgehog, and Mrs. Palmer sent to the pastry-cook's for some raspberry jam, to make creams in little jelly glasses, looking like inverted extinguishers; and spent half the morning in whipping up froth with a cane whisk to put on their tops like shaving lather. And Miss Palmer cut bits of paper, and curled them with the scissors to put round the "wax ends" in the glass lustres on the chimney-piece, and the three-cornered lamp in the drawing-room was taken out of its brown holland bag, and the maid set to clean it, on a pair of ricketty steps; and the cases were taken off the bell-pulls, and the picture frames were dusted, and the covers taken off the card-tables, all in honour of the approaching *fête*.

Then came the agonies of the father, mother, and daughter, just about five o'clock of the day itself, when the drawing-room chimney smoked; and apprehensions assailed them lest the fish should be overdone; the horrors excited by a noise in the kitchen as if the cod's head and shoulders had tumbled into the sand on the floor; that cod's head and shoulders which Mr. Palmer had himself gone to the fishmonger's to buy, and in determin-

ing the excellence of which, had poked his fingers into fifty cods, and forty turbots, to ascertain which was firmest, freshest, and best; and then the tremor caused by the stoppages of different hackney coaches in the neighbourhood, not to speak of the smell of roasted mutton, which pervaded the whole house, intermingled with an occasional whiff of celery, attributable to the assiduous care of Mrs. Palmer, who always mixed the sallad herself, and smelt of it all the rest of the day; the disagreeable discovery just made that the lamp on the staircase would not burn, the slight inebriation of the cook, bringing into full play a latent animosity towards the housemaid, founded on jealousy, and soothed by the mediation of the neighbouring green grocer, hired for five shillings to wait at table on the great occasion.

Just as the Major and Mrs. Overall actually drove up, the said attendant green grocer, the Cock Pomona of the neighbourhood, had *just* stepped out to the public house, to fetch "the porter." The door was of course opened by the housemaid. The afternoon being windy, the tallow candle which she held was instantaneously blown out, at the same instant the back kitchen door was blown to, with a tremendous noise,

occasioning, by the concussion, the fall of a pile of plates, put on the dresser ready to be carried up into the parlour, and the overthrow of a modicum of oysters, in a blue basin, which were subsequently, but with difficulty, gathered up individually from the floor by the hands of the cook, and converted in due season into sauce, for the before mentioned cod's head and shoulders.

At this momentous crisis, the green grocer (acting waiter) returned with two pots of Meux and Co.'s Entire, upon the tops of which stood heads, not a little resembling the whipped stuff upon the raspberry creams,—open goes the door again, puff goes the wind, and off go the "heads" of the porter pots, into the faces of the refined Major Overall, and his adorable bride, who was disrobing at the foot of the stairs.

The Major, who was a man of the world, and had seen society in all its grades, bore the pelting of this pitiless storm with magnanimity and without surprise; but Jane, whose sphere of motion had been somewhat more limited, and who had encountered but very little variety either of scenery or action, beyond the every-day routine of a quiet country house, enlivened

periodically by a six weeks trip to London, was somewhat astounded at the noise and confusion, the banging of doors, the clattering of crockery, and the confusion of tongues, which the untimely arrival of the company, and the porter at the same moment had occasioned; nor was the confusion less confounded by the thundering double knock of Mr. Olinthus Crackenthorpe, of Holborn Court, Gray's Inn, who followed the beer (which, as Shaskpeare has it, "was at the door,") as gravely and methodically as an undertaker.

Up the precipitous and narrow staircase were the Major and Mrs Overall ushered, she having been divested of her shawl and boa by the housemaid, who threw her "things" into a dark hole, y'cleped the back parlour, where boots and umbrellas, a washing stand, the canvas bag of the drawing-room lamp, the table covers, and "master's" great coats, were all huddled in one grand miscellany. Just as the little procession was on the point of climbing, Hollingsworth the waiter coming in, feeling the absolute necessity of announcing all the company himself, sets down the porter pots upon the mat in the passage, nearly pushes down the housemaid who was about to usurp his

place, and who in her anxiety to please Mr. Crackenthorpe (who was what she called a nice gentleman), abandons her position at the staircase, and flies to the door for the purpose of admitting him; in her zeal and activity to achieve this feat, she most unfortunately upsets one of the porter pots and inundates the little passage, miscalled the hall, with a sweeping flood of the aforementioned mixture of Messrs. Meux and Co.

Miss Engleheart, of Bernard-street, Russell-square, who had been invited to meet the smart folks, because she was a smart person herself, arrived shortly after; indeed so rapidly did she, like Rugby, follow Mr. Crackenthorpe's heels, that he had but just time to deposit his great coat and goloshes (in which he had walked from chambers) in the black hole where everything was thrust, before the lovely Charlotte made her appearance.

Here, then, at length, was the snug little party assembled, and dinner was forthwith ordered; Miss Engleheart made the amiable to Mrs. Overall, who was received by both the young ladies with all that deference and respect which the formidable rank and title of wife commands. The three ladies sat together; Mr.

Palmer performed fire-screen with his face to the company, and Major Overall, having first looked at Crackenthorpe for about five minutes, with an expression of countenance indicative of thinking him capable of cutting a throat or picking a pocket, at length disturbed the *tête-à-tête* which that respectable young lawyer was carrying on with the head of the house.

Mrs. Palmer at this period suddenly disappeared to direct the "serving up," and regulate the precedence of butter-boats, and the arrangements of the vegetables, which were put down to steam on the dinner-table in covered dishes, two on a side; a tureen of mock turtle from Mr. Tiley in Tavistock-Place, being at the bottom, and our old friend, the cod's head and shoulders, dressed in a horse-radish wig, and lemon-slice buttons at the top. An oval pond of stewed calves' head, dotted with dirt balls, and surrounded by dingy brain and egg pancakes, stood next the fish, and a couple of rabbits, smothered in onions, next the soup. In the centre of the table towered a grotesque pyramid, known as an epergne, at the top of which were large pickles in a glass dish, and round which hung divers and sundry cut-glass saucers, in which were deposited small pickles and

lemons, alternately dangling gracefully. At the corners of the table were deposited the four masses of vegetable matter before mentioned, and in the interstices a pretty little saucer of currant-jelly, with an interesting companion full of horse-radish; all of which being arranged to her entire and perfect satisfaction, Mrs. Palmer again hurried up to the drawing-room, as red as a turkey cock, in order to appear as if she had been doing nothing at all, and to be just in time to be handed down again by the major.

The table was soon arranged; the major, on the right hand of Mrs. Palmer, was doomed to be roasted by the flame of the fire; and the bride, on the right hand of Mr. Palmer, was destined to be blown to shivers by the wind from the door. Mr. Crackenthorpe, who stood six feet three without his shoes, coiled up his legs under his chair, to the direful inconvenience of the green grocer "daily waiter," who regularly stumbled over them whenever he approached his mistress on the sinister side, and much to the annoyance of Miss Charlotte Engleheart, who had long had a design upon the said Crackenthorpe for a husband, and who was in the habit of toe-treading and foot-feeling, after

the custom of the tribes with whom she had been habituated to dwell.

Miss Palmer's whole anxiety was in the dinner; her heart was in the tipsy-cake, and all her hopes and wishes centered in the little jelly-glasses: divers and sundries were the hems and winks, which she bestowed upon the waiter, in order to regulate the putting down of the different little niceties; and the discovery which, shortly after the appearance of the second course, was made, that a trifle in a white wig of froth, which had superseded the big pickles on the top of the epergne, was considerably damaged by the dripping of oil from the lamp, which hung invidiously over it, nearly threw her into hysterics.

Vain were all the protestations of Mrs. Overall, that she never ate trifle—vain were all the screams of the major, to reassure her—vain were the pleadings of Crackenthorpe, and the consolations of Miss Engleheart; "it was *so* provoking"—after all the pains, and the cakes, and the cream, and the wine, and the whipping—"dear, dear, only to think," and so on, which continued till the trifle itself was removed; when Emma left the room to follow the dear object of her love into the dark back par-

lour, where the dessert was laid out, and where the said trifle, amidst papa's umbrellas, Mr. Crackenthorpe's goloshes, and Mrs. Overall's boa, stood untouched, in order, if possible, to skim off the oleaginous matter which it had imbibed, before it sank through to the "nice rich part at the bottom," and to rescue some portion of the materials, to serve up the next evening, when they expected a few neighbours to tea and supper.

It must be confessed, a more unsatisfactory afternoon never was spent; and poor Jane frequently recurred with regret to the agreeable society she had left. Even the Major, after he had astonished the natives with accounts of Rome, and Florence, and Naples—his fêtes to four hundred nobles, with a closet full of cardinals, and a boudoir full of princes—his details of the Neapolitan state coachmen, driving unhatted, in judges' full-bottomed wigs—Roman butchers in togas—vipers at Pæstum, robbers at Salerno, and fire-works in the eternal city, finding either that he was not understood, or, if understood, not believed, gave up the narrative and historical line, and took to listening; but he was there equally out of his element: the young ladies and Mr. Crackenthorpe talked about the

playhouses, and Miss Engleheart seemed specially versed in the private histories of the most celebrated performers, and was acquainted with a family where she had met a gentleman, who had actually come out at one of the winter theatres in Jaffier.

Nothing requires greater tact in a man than to assimilate himself with the habitual conversation of those into whose society he may happen to be thrown: subjects which to one grade are of the most vital interest and importance, are to another race of people perfectly unintelligible; the diversion of a village pathway will furnish amusement and instruction to a party of country gentlemen, in whom the probable results of a Russian campaign or a Greek revolution, excite not the slightest interest; and a set of sportsmen will discuss a fox-chase over a difficult country, until they fall asleep, which would infuse a degree of opium into the ears of the town-bred cognoscenti, sufficiently strong to send them to their slumbers long before the "tellers of the tale" had sunk under their labours.

Overall reckoned himself what, when he was at Eton, he would have called a dab, at this sort of adaptation of his mental powers; but he found himself, in Hunter-street, Bruns-

wick-square, foiled at his own weapons, and beaten at his own game; for, although he did not know every thing that was going on in the world, the total ignorance of any thing actually stirring which his associates displayed, put him entirely *hors de combat:* while the bride, fatigued partly with travelling, and partly with anxiety and excitement, concomitant with her new character, could scarcely keep herself awake until the travelling-carriage, made to go about the streets, with a pair of job horses, was announced. Indeed, the Major himself, when he found the sort of person his *homme d'affaires* was at home, regretted not a little that he had not run the risque of offending him, and left his dear Jane to enjoy the society of her dear Katherine.

But something was to be elicited even in the deserts of Gray's-Inn-lane and the wilds of Brunswick-square. Mr. Crackenthorpe, a tall, boney hatchet-faced young lawyer, either called, or about to be called forthwith to the bar, with a high aquiline nose, bristly light hair, swimming blue eyes, and huge white teeth,—a skeleton as to flesh, and in height, a living slice of a sucking giant; in the course of conversation, mentioned the name of Somerford, a friend of his, with

whom he believed Mr. Maxwell's family was acquainted.

Now the recurrence to Mr. Maxwell's family, under the circumstances, was not particularly agreeable to the Major in a mixed company; and although peace had that day been declared between the high contracting powers, it still bore the appearance rather of an armed neutrality, than that of an alliance, offensive and defensive, as might have been wished; but when the minute Major observed the opposite two yards and a quarter of humanity actually in motion, apparently with the design of explaining deliberately, and at length, the particular circumstances of his intimacy with Lieutenant Somerford, his irritation became evident.

"I believe," said Crackenthorpe, coiling up his legs, and thus endeavouring to get nearer Jane, "I believe Somerford was at one time very intimate at Mr. Maxwell's—that was when they lived in Lincoln's-Inn-fields, I believe."

"I really don't know," said Mrs. Overall, evidently betraying by her manner that she knew all about it.

"I do," said Crackenthorpe. "Somerford and I were at school together; he was considerably my senior."

"Always," interrupted the major. "I never heard any man speak of a school-fellow, who didn't make the same observation—curious—odd—strange— hey, Palmer! — wonderful!—surprising—eh?"

"And before he left Europe for India," continued the tall lawyer, "I think it was very nearly a match in that family—but your friend, as I take it, played the jilt a little."

"Oh, Mr. Crackenthorpe," said Miss Engleheart, "how *can* you charge any young lady with such atrocity?"

"Atrocity!" said the lawyer, "a mere exercise of intelligence—surely a lady may be very fond of a person in her early youth, and yet see cause, as she grows up, to change her mind."

"I can't agree with you there," said Miss Engleheart; I think that a girl who—"

"Miss E., Miss E., my dear, here," said Mrs. Palmer, in a tremendous bustle, "my dear, would not you like a hand-screen, my love?"

"No, Ma'am, thank you," said Miss Engleheart. "I say, Mr. Crackenthorpe, that a young woman engaged to be married to a—"

"Margaret, dear," said Miss Palmer, "where

did you put the music of the—the—what do you call the thing ?"

" Why," screamed the young lady, " one would think some of you here were inclined to deceive your swains, by the way you conspire to interrupt me."

" No, no," said Mrs. Palmer, " nobody wants to interrupt you, my dear child, only I thought the fire was too hot, and—ring the bell, Mr. P., we'll have those things taken away."

The blundering confusion by which the little denunciation of jilting, which Miss Engleheart was about to pronounce, was checked, created too much bustle to escape the Major ; but even that might have blown over, had not Mrs. Palmer, as Miss Engleheart, tired of attempting to be didactic, was leading Miss Palmer to her seat, on a creaking music stool, before an upright Broadwood, gone up to the Major's lady, and taking her by both hands, whispered, " you musn't be offended, my dear Mrs. O., Miss E. knew nothing at all about *your* affair when she made her observations—only I thought it best to stop her in time, you know."

This clenched all, and Mrs. Overall turned

from the benevolent mistress of the house with delight to the conversation of Crackenthorpe, who proceeded to explain how very deeply *his* friend, Somerford, had been attached to *her* friend, Miss Maxwell, and how sorry he was to have heard of his death at the Cape of Good Hope; especially, as he had reason to believe, that some relation of his had expressed an intention of leaving him a very valuable property.

"I regret," said Jane, "to hear of the death of any person of whom I have heard such high and favourable opinions, and particularly at a time, when, as you appear to think, fortune seemed inclined to smile upon him. However, since you have touched upon the subject, which is an interdicted one at Mr. Maxwell's house, I believe that there never was any change in Miss Maxwell's feelings towards him; she obeyed the positive injunctions of her father, and consented to give up all hopes of him, but—'

"I thought you mentioned after dinner," said Mr. Crackenthorpe, "that Miss Maxwell was on the point of marriage—is *that* quite reconcileable with the character of an affection, such as you seem to think hers to have been."

"If you knew her," said Jane, "I think

you could perfectly believe that it was. She established a line of conduct consonant with what she held to be her duty in obeying the commands of her father; several years, as many as seven or eight, have passed since she formed the resolution of conquering the attachment she had conceived, and she now consents to unite herself to a worthy and excellent man, upon a principle similar to that, on which she relinquished Mr. Somerford."

"There is too much calculation in all that arrangement," said the long lawyer, "to promise any thing like happiness—a heart that can forget by order, and love by command, is not—"

"I did not say *that*," interrupted Mrs. Overall; "duty may decide a daughter to relinquish a loved object. I did not say she had forgotten him,—and duty may decide a daughter—"

"—to love another," again interrupted Crackenthorpe.

"I did not say she *did* love him," replied Mrs. Overall. "I am as much of an enthusiast as you appear to be, in these matters, and where indifference exists between two people so connected as man and wife, something more than indifference is likely to ensue.

"Why, then, according to your theory, Miss Maxwell has no pleasing prospect," said the lawyer.

"She is secure from those evils to which a person of weaker intellect might be subject," said Jane: "well regulated and excellent as her mind is, and firm as are her principles, there is nothing to be feared for her, or the man she marries. He, on the other hand, is a well-meaning, honest, honourable person, full of integrity and common-sense; he neither expects nor could comprehend that sort of ardent love to which you refer."

"My dear Jane, the carriage has been here these ten minutes," whispered the major, having roused himself from a sort of waking slumber, for that purpose, and moreover, because he heard his bride lecturing upon love, in a style somewhat too florid, and a manner somewhat too animated to be quite satisfactory to him as a bridegroom.

During the conversation between Mrs. Overall and Crackenthorpe, which began at length to be rather interesting, inasmuch as it gave the lady an opportunity to descant, and that too upon a subject with which she was intimately connected; Miss Engleheart had been accom-

panying Miss Palmer in the beautiful English song of "Bid me discourse." Indeed if these young ladies had not kindly begun their music, there would have been no conversation at all; and although Mr. and Mrs. Palmer watched the performance with all the natural anxiety of parents who pay for education, and in silence, perfectly consistent with their admiration of the result, Crackenthorpe and Mrs. Overall were too much used to the ways of society, to lose the opportunity of the singing, to talk, and the major was by far too independent, too tired, and too fond of Italy, to do any thing but dose as well as he could, under the influence of the disagreeable noise which the two young ladies were making; while the poor things themselves, as far as they were personally concerned, would have given the world not to have been asked to exhibit their little winning ways before the visitors,—she who accompanied being too much alarmed ever to keep with her friend who sang, and she who sang, trembling too much ever to shake, which, when she was not frightened, she could do as well as Catalani—at least, so one person in Bernard-street, Russell-square, had said and thought.

"We must wait till Miss Engleheart has finished her song," whispered Jane.

"Oh! she is singing, is she?" said the major —"oh! certainly."

"I still contend," said Crackenthorpe, who thought the major's interruption of his conversation with Mrs. Overall extremely ill-bred,— "that Miss Maxwell will be extremely wrong to unite herself with her present lover, if, at least, she have a community of feeling with you, who are her friend."

"We think alike upon several points," said Jane, "but not on all."

"Miss Maxwell has a brother, I believe," said Crackenthorp, "who either is, or has been studying, as it is called, for the bar."

"Yes," said Mrs. Overall, blushing all over her cheeks and neck; "a very excellent, amiable, young man—he—I—that is—I have a very high regard for him."

"I don't know him myself, 'personally,'" said Mr. Crackenthorpe, "but I have heard him spoken of frequently—idle, I believe, professionally speaking; careless, as rich men always are, who threaten to become lawyers —and rich I am told he will be."

"I believe, very well off," said Jane; "his

father has been so long eminent in his profession, and—"

"Ah! but, besides that," said Crackenthorp, "there is some cousin of his, in the country, who is very rich, I believe; but the difficulty is to get him to marry her, for I am told she is not exactly presentable in London society—at least as he thinks—a sort of dowdy dawdle. I heard a great friend of the family, Mr. Godfrey Moss, describe her one day I dined where he was, and we were discussing the Maxwells, without knowing how intimate Mr. Moss was with them: and nothing, to be sure, *is* so awkward, as beginning a discussion about a set of people, with somebody, who, perhaps, is particularly interested about them."

"Yes, it is—it is very disagreeable," stammered Mrs. Overall;—"the music, I believe, is over; I must obey my lord and master—I—"

And up got Mrs. Overall, hardly knowing whether she stood upon her head or her heels, to seek her husband, to send for her boa, (which, in those days, was called a tippet,) and her shawl; and, burning with agitation and shivering with horror at her own story, which had been so unconsciously detailed by her new and communicative friend, the discomfited

bride beat a speedy retreat, and was handed down the little ladder to the little hall, by Mr. Palmer, who expressed a thousand delights at having had the honour of her company; while the major's shrill exclamations of "charming—kind—magnificent—snug—comfortable" were resounded through the whole building. Buttoned up in the carriage, up went the glasses, up jumped Walker into the rumble, and away went the horses.

When Mr. Palmer returned to the drawing-room, he found Mrs. Palmer in a serious agony, the girls laughing heartily, and Mr. Crackenthorp, with his head above the lamp, making a sort of serio-comic face of despair. They had just informed him of the nature of the connexion which was to have existed between Mrs. Overall and Ned Maxwell, and enough of the outline of the story to prove that if he had been dropping shot into the ears of the bride, he could not more effectually have agonised her. Miss Engleheart, in turn, became shocked at the errors she was told *she* had committed in censuring jilts, but reconciled herself by this question,—how should *she* know anything about the private affairs of the Maxwell family? And in truth there would

have been very little in her blunders, if Mrs. Palmer, with the sweet anxiety so natural to the tribe of dealers in matter of fact, had not undertaken to soothe away the unintentional allusions which, had they remained unexplained, would never have been considered any allusions at all.

Crackenthorpe, discomforted, prepared for retreat; not, however, before he had pronounced an eulogy upon his late lamented friend Somerford—upon that individual, whose name "once familiar," as the popular Bayly has it, Miss Maxwell had forbidden herself to speak. By the account which might have been gathered of his merits and virtues, the late Lieutenant Somerford must have been a very paragon of perfection, and it would have appeared miraculous that Maxwell, indulgent father as he was, should have so peremptorily insisted upon his dismissal, if it had not been also recorded in history that the lieutenant was pennyless. His commission was his fortune, and Maxwell, when Katherine was sixteen, designed her for a duchess. Time, and the disappointment of her fondest hopes, had, however, reduced her pretensions; she sank annually in attraction; and during the last two years, her fall had been so

rapid, that she had settled in the Stock Ex change; and, from the golden circlet with the strawberry leaves, the splendid equipage, and endless train of servants, she had descended to contentment in Burlington Gardens, with a city husband and one pair of job horses.

The little party at Mr. Palmer's dissolved. Mr. Crackenthorpe re-embarked his long feet in his capacious goloshes; Miss Engleheart was littered up in the straw of a hackney coach, which her pa's foot-boy had brought for her; and the family of P's were speedily locked in balmy sleep; to which happy state, however, none of the party were reduced until they had seriously and separately thought over the previously curious *contretemps* of the evening; Mr. and Mrs. Palmer having re-discussed the dinner in detail, counted up the cost and charges, and lamented in vain the oily current which had spoiled the trifle—"*Parva lævos capiunt animos*;" but this feast to them was nothing trifling—that they gave such an entertainment the reader should rejoice, because, if they had not done so, he never would have known the name of Miss Maxwell's favoured lover, nor have received such authentic intelligence of his melancholy decease.

CHAPTER IX.

> "As skilful surgeons cut beyond the wound,
> To make the cure more certain."
>
> TOBIN.

So, then—the secret—that is to say, Miss Maxwell's secret, has been divulged, and the "once-familiar name" disclosed to the reader. As so much is known, perhaps it will be right to let the reader know a little more.

Somerford, then, was the son of a medical practitioner, whose success had not been perhaps equal to his merit, which was of the quiet, unpretending, and laborious school. In early life, the elder Somerford and Maxwell had been very intimate, but Somerford's habits did not assimilate

with those of his fellow pupil. In person plain, and in manners simple and unrefined, he failed to please where he was introduced; and although his skill was undoubted, his opportunities of exhibiting it were few; and after many vain attempts in London to rise above the current, which seemed to set against him, he died a suburban practitioner on a very small scale, leaving a widow and a son, Charles Somerford, who, during his youth, had been the constant associate of Katherine Maxwell, and almost the constant inmate of her father's house.

When the elder Somerford died, and the confined income of his widow, and the almost destitute state of the young man, became known to Maxwell, he exerted the interest he possessed in some high quarters, and procured him an ensigncy in the army, anxious at once to provide for the son of an old friend, and, to say truth, to get rid of a person for whom it was but too clear, even for his paternal eyes to doubt, his daughter had formed a most ardent and enthusiastic attachment. The regiment to which Mr. Charles Somerford was appointed, was at Calcutta, and had only just gone to India: its return, therefore, could not be anticipated under eighteen or twenty

years; and although this might seem something like banishing the lad, yet he felt satisfied with the conduct he was pursuing, by establishing what Apperton would have called an "account current" in his mind, between the cruelty of separating young Somerford from his daughter on the one hand, and the kindness and benevolence of providing for him, in an honourable profession, on the other.

When the announcement of the success of Maxwell's application was made, it was received by the young people as the death-blow to their mutual hopes. Somerford, whose education had been of the best, whose disposition was the kindest, and whose talents were really of the first order, was so identified by Kate with all her happy hours, and all her agreeable pursuits, that a separation from him was the very bitterest event which had marred the brightness of her yet short life. She had then a mother living, and in *her* kindness and sympathy, it is true, she felt some consolation; but it was poor indeed. The die, however, was cast.

Maxwell too clearly saw the dismay which the happy issue of his suit at head-quarters had caused in the young people; but he resolved *not* to see it. If Somerford was now driven to an

acknowledgment of his feelings, he must, of course, exert his authority, and so put an end to the affair; because, if at any time he might have been disposed to listen to the supplications of his daughter to permit so imprudent a match, now the thing would be beyond madness,—since the young man was about to quit England for years, and must, of course, deprive her fond parents of an affectionate daughter's society. Maxwell, not stopping to consider that the last mentioned objection was raised, by himself, or if he did consider, not choosing to admit that the principal reason for his selecting the army as the profession of a *protégé* whose education had been finished for other pursuits, was, that he might banish him from the society of his daughter, who, as I somewhere else have said, his wife and himself then intended for a duchess.

When Maxwell had arranged all the preliminaries for the departure of Somerford, he took care to manage so that his daughter and the young soldier should not enjoy the satisfaction of a parting interview; he dreaded the effects of such a separation upon her sensitive mind, and arguing prudently that needless pain can do no good, contrived that Mrs. Maxwell and

Kate should go for three days on a visit to some friends in Kent, while he busied himself with the exportation of the ensign, whom he never suffered to be out of his sight until he had carried him, in the most affectionate manner, in his own carriage down to Portsmouth, and actually seen him take possession of his berth in the after-cabin, which had been secured for him on board the Honourable Company's ship, Mulligatawny, Captain Rice—in which huge ark Maxwell left him, and retracing his steps to London, arrived at his house exactly in time to receive his wife and daughter on their return from the country.

It so happened, that the wind chopping round to the "norrad" of east, the Mulligatawny got under weigh that very evening; bearing in her huge bosom Ensign Somerford, who, being in a state of utter dependance upon Maxwell, was prevented, by a kind of nervous apprehension which such unfortunate people feel, from even expressing a wish about Kate, or complaining of the extraordinary manner in which he had been kidnapped or smuggled away, without one word at parting.

Maxwell, over and above the fear he expressed lest the delicacy of Kate's constitution,

and the sensitiveness of her disposition, should be injured by the agitation of a last interview with the young soldier, anticipated some direful results of a different nature from such a meeting. He knew that, with all the delicacy and timidity which are the sweetest attributes of her sex, Kate possessed a firmness of principle, and a feeling of right, so strong and powerful, that if, in the last few minutes of her association with the ensign, any promise of fidelity had been required, or any pledge given, he was convinced no power on earth would have shaken her resolution in abiding by it. This sort of engagement a woman keeps inviolable, even although she sees no prospect of its happy termination. Hundreds of hearts have been broken, and hundreds of lives have been sacrificed, by the rigid adherence to a faith once plighted. Maxwell, by cunningly taking the young couple unawares, prevented the mischief; and accordingly, as we have just seen, he put the youthful warrior *hors de combat*, as far as concerned the amatory campaign, which he had too successfully conducted in the surgeon's house in London.

But although the system pursued by Max-

well was more likely to be successful than any other, it was not quite in accordance with the general leniency of his character: nor did he, with all his knowledge of human nature, and of his daughter's disposition, quite correctly appreciate the effect producible by the unexpected removal of Somerford from their family circle—unexpected perhaps it can scarcely be called, because his appointment had been discussed, and various preparations made for his outfit and expedition; but the loss of him without parting was unexpected: and it was not till the whole evening and part of the day succeeding it, on which she and her mother returned home, had passed away, that the fact of his being gone —actually gone—eternally gone—was communicated to her.

Who but a being who has felt as *she* did, can describe the lightning flash of anguish which seemed to shiver her whole frame? It was a dream—it was false—it could not be reality—that she never, never more was to see Charles Somerford—the playmate of her childhood—the companion of her youth—the sharer of her heart. It was the first pang of real sorrow she had felt—it was the sundering of ties, of whose

strength she herself was not before aware. It seemed as if her heartstrings had snapped.

Maxwell, whose scientific knowledge saved him from alarm for his daughter's physical security under the effects of her mental distress, contemplated the storm he had raised with more of satisfaction than regret. What he saw, more fully convinced him of the wisdom of what he had done; and his attention was chiefly directed towards assuring his wife, whose natural alarm for the fate of her child was not unmixed with a feeling of something like reproach towards her husband for what appeared even to her, especially now she witnessed the results it had produced, a needless refinement of cruelty.

But there was a reason for Maxwell's extraordinary caution, and unusual severity of conduct in this particular instance, which, to the world at large will perhaps appear just. There *are* those to whom the distinction which gave birth to it, will seem harsh and cruel; but against laws which religion enforces and society obeys, they must not murmur loudly, let them feel never so deeply.

The mother of Somerford was the illegiti-

mate daughter of some wealthy person, and had become acquainted with her late husband in the country, where he had passed some of the earlier years of his professional career. She still survived; but the fact that the individuals to whose guardianship she had been from infancy confided, were of a rank below the middling class of society, that her education had been extremely limited, and that her parent, whoever he might be, had never been personally known to those people; the sums allowed for her subsistence having been transmitted by an agent, on condition that the child was to pass as theirs (to which deception the loss of an infant of their own, about the same period, was made subservient,) and in that character she married the elder Somerford, then acting in a subordinate capacity in the town near which she resided; nor did he know that his wife was not the daughter of Thomas Woodley, the miller of Rayford, until, on the death of her supposed mother, the old lady being (better late than never) conscience stricken on the point, stated the fact, that Sophy was not *her* child, and that the six hundred pounds which Somerford received as her portion, came not

from her honest Thomas, who never was worth half the money, but from the father of the girl.

The respectable Mrs. Woodley, who could not "die easy" without disburdening her mind of this secret, unfortunately however deferred her communications to so late a period of her existence, that when Somerford, who was at her bed-side, pressed her to name the father of his wife, she could not rally sufficiently to explain herself, and expired in his arms without satisfying his very natural curiosity.

Somerford's situation was curious—in the chamber of sickness and death, and where his wife was bending over the bed of her supposed parent, in the midst of his cares and anxieties for the safety of one so nearly connected with himself, and so dearly allied to his better half, he became suddenly and unexpectedly enlightened upon a subject, touching which his suspicions had never been in the slightest degree awakened; and, singular as it is to say, it is true that Sophy Somerford, from constant association with the Woodleys, had acquired unconsciously so many of their habits, and so much of their manner—not so advantageously to herself as might have been—that Somerford, deceived by this sympathetic resemblance,

and ready, as all men and women are, to concede a "strong likeness" between parents and children, had reasoned himself—or perhaps looked himself—into believing, that his Sophy had her father's eyes to a turn, and, as Sheridan says, "her mother's chin to a hair."

After a seasonable period devoted to grief, and the performance of the last duties towards one, whom Sophy, even when she knew she was not her child, could scarcely bring herself to consider in any other light than a mother, the two Somerfords hunted every nook and corner of the old gentlewoman's residence, in hopes of finding some trace of the parents to whom the self-imagined orphan was really indebted, under Heaven, for her existence—but in vain. The conditions of secrecy had been so faithfully observed, and so religiously fulfilled, that not a letter, not a memorandum, not a paper referring to the subject, could be discovered; indeed Woodley had for so many years been considered as the father of the girl, that, added to the natural fidelity and firmness with which he kept the secret, the wish of his heart was, that Sophy herself should never be undeceived: and that his friends and relations and neighbours should alike remain ignorant of the real truth,

and of how long he had been practising upon them a piece of deception.

That there *were* persons who could immediately enlighten Mr. and Mrs. Somerford upon the important point, there could be no doubt. Whether it was likely they would or would not, the couple most interested did not pretend to guess; but their speculations as to this intention or desire were very soon terminated.

Somerford and his wife, a few days after the funeral of his *soi-disant* mother-in-law, were seated by the fire in their humble home, the sorrowing Sophy having on her knee the identical Ensign Somerford of whom we are now treating, when the ostler's boy, belonging to the Green Dragon "up street," knocked at the door. The maid servant opened it, and Bill—familiar name—informed her, that a gentleman wished to see Doctor Somerford (so was the pale-faced stripling called in those parts) up at his master's house.

The fee-faw-fum feelings of poor Somerford were roused in an instant. A patient at the Green Dragon!—Not a moment was to be wasted. The traveller might die—or, perhaps, get well, before he reached him. In either case, a loss was to be dreaded; and, accordingly, great-

coat on, and umbrella under arm, lint and lancets in pocket, off goes Somerford, leaving the future ensign and lover, in a paroxysm of squalling, which not all the tender assiduities of his fond mother could assuage, and which made the small tenement they occupied ring again.

Bright visions beamed before Somerford's eyes as he paced, in the dark, towards the best inn. Some great person indisposed, might perhaps be cured by his skill and attention; and then, perhaps, he might take him by the hand, and then, perhaps, carry him to London, and bring him into fashion; then he might take his degree—and then set up his carriage—be made physician to some illustrious personage—and—with which step in the ladder of his life, he reached the Green Dragon—where, in a very few minutes, he found himself *tête à tête*, with one of the healthiest looking persons he had ever seen, and whose disorder, if he had one, was not of that class, which evince themselves by external symptoms.

"Mr. Somerford?" repeated the stranger, inquiringly, as the waiter announced the apothecary.

"Exactly so," said the apothecary.

"Mr. Somerford," said the stranger, "I am afraid I have disturbed you from your avocations, and called you, perhaps needlessly, from your home; but I—I—wished to ask you a question, which, perhaps, you will excuse me for putting to you, when I assure you I do so with the best possible intentions."

"Sir!" said Somerford, somewhat puzzled.

"I believe, Mr. Somerford," continued the stranger, "you married a daughter of Mr. Woodley, an inhabitant of this neighbourhood?"

Now was the current of Somerford's thoughts changed. Phials, physic, leeches, lint, and lancets all disappeared from his mind. No longer did he see in the newly arrived traveller before him the patient seeking advice; in an instant he beheld the herald of his future fortunes, the man who was to inform him that his Sophy was the daughter of some great person who, for state reasons, had been hitherto immured in obscurity, and who, perhaps, had claims upon the thrones of half the countries in Europe.

"I did, Sir," said Somerford—"that is to say, Sir—I thought so, until the week before last."

"How d'ye mean?" said the stranger, somewhat moved.

"Why," added the apothecary, "then I came to understand that my wife was *not* the person she was usually taken for."

"Indeed!" said the stranger, evidently much agitated by this little bit of intelligence; "how were you undeceived?"

"Her mother," said Somerford, "that is, her supposed mother—"

"Stay, Sir, let me see if the door is fast," said the stranger, walking to the said door, and opening it to ascertain that there were no listeners, and then closing it securely.

"As I was saying, Sir," resumed Somerford, "her supposed mother—"

"I know," interrupted the stranger, "died about a fortnight ago—had you no suspicions before?"

"None."

"The father—that is, Woodley—then, never hinted such a thing?"

"Never," said Somerford.

"And the mother told you the whole story?" said the stranger.

"She did."

"Well, Mr. Somerford," said the stranger,

with an increased shew of courtesy, "it is upon *that* point I wished to speak to you. I suppose the old woman felt some scruples as to dying and leaving you in error."

"Exactly so," said Somerford.

"And you have, I presume, taken no steps in consequence of the disclosure," said the stranger.

"Steps!" said Somerford, with his eyes very widely open.

"I mean, you have not mentioned the circumstance to any of your neighbours?"

"No," said Somerford—"I thought, and my wife thought so too, that we had better keep the affair secret, and see how things would turn up."

"You haven't, I know, made any application to the real father of Mrs. Somerford," said the stranger, "and we very much applaud your conduct, for it is as well to be explicit at once; the portion you received with your wife was stated at the time to Woodley, (who, of course, as if on his own part, told *you*,) to be the whole and last amount of what might be considered the charge upon her natural parent."

"I don't clearly understand, Sir," said Somerford.

"I mean," said the stranger, "that when Woodley proposed giving his daughter, as you

then supposed her, six hundred pounds, he gave you to understand that you were to expect nothing more."

"He did," said Somerford; "but we have received some small additional sum since the death of the widow."

"Now, Mr. Somerford," said the stranger, "although that was decidedly the understanding on the one part and the feeling on the other, it is not the wish of the person most intimately concerned in this affair rigidly to adhere to that determination; and since you have been put in possession of a secret (the developement of which, however, can be of no advantage to you or your wife), it will be the wish of that person to prove to you the needlessness of any application to him, by meeting your views in any moderate way, so as to render your situation in life more easy and comfortable than it may be now; and I must tell you in fairness, that your having abstained from using the knowledge you have acquired, in a manner which might, particularly at this juncture, cause your best friend much inconvenience, has not been overlooked, but, on the contrary, is as I before said, duly appreciated."

"Why, Sir," said Somerford, not at all see-

ing the powerful kick he was about to give his future good fortunes; "I could not, very well, have applied to any body, for although poor old Mrs. Woodley told me the secret of my wife not being *her* daughter, she, very unfortunately, expired, before she could explain to me, whose child she really is."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the stranger, elevating his brows into a towering arch, and screwing up his mouth into the smallest possible circle, so as to produce an involuntary whistle. "Oh! then you are yet to learn whom your *best friend* is."

"Indeed, I am," said Somerford. "I married my wife because I loved her—I thought her name was Woodley; and it is not because she is called anything else, Sir, that I shall love her less, or cease to appreciate her good qualities. I have no right to be dissatisfied if her real parents never see her again; for those whom I thought, and whom she thought, were her parents, can never see her more on earth. The man whom I thought her father, I thought a suitable connexion for myself—he gave her a sum of money, which I considered a suitable portion for his daughter. To marry her, under all those circumstances, was

the object of my ambition, and I succeeded. I gained all I wished for, and I wished for nothing more—and I am only sorry that the poor old gentlewoman said any thing about the matter, since it naturally unsettles my wife's mind, and renders her anxious upon a point about which I care nothing; all I would ask, is, if her father be alive and wealthy, that when I die, and die poor—(which I am sure I shall,) he will not forget *his* child or mine."

Tears trickled down the stranger's face, as the ingenuous Somerford thus spoke the honest feelings of his heart. He took him by both his hands, and pressed them fervently; but it was quite evident to the stranger, that such a man would live and die an unenriched apothecary.

"Mr. Somerford," said he, "you will lose nothing by this conduct."

"I confess," said Somerford, who did not appear conscious that he had said or done any thing particularly praiseworthy, by making his declaration, "I should like to be trusted with the secret, for I could keep it, and I—"

"We must discuss that farther," said the stranger. "How miraculous that death should have intervened, to save the old woman from perjury—for she, like her husband, had been

sworn to secrecy.—And no paper, no document, nothing was left, by which the relationship can be traced ?"

" Not one atom, Sir ?" said Somerford.

" Will you excuse me one moment ?" said the stranger. " I have a small pacquet of papers up-stairs, which I will confide to your care, on condition that you promise me not to open it, until you receive a written permission. I think I may venture so far, without infringing my instructions."

Somerford bowed assent, and the stranger proceeded to fetch the pacquet.

" This is very extraordinary," said Somerford to himself, as he stretched himself in one of the arm'd chairs before the fire—" this will do—fortune has at length slipped the fillet from her eyes, and sees my merits—how delighted Sophy will be ; and yet, perhaps, even now, I shall not know whose son-in-law I am. Poor old Woodley—and mother. Ah ! well—they are gone, and God bless them ; they were kind to me, and received me hospitably, when—no matter—I wish they had told me—but then they were bound to secrecy—sworn and so—psha !—every thing is for the best, and some day I shall be as well off as Alexander Max-

well, perhaps, who has often told me I should never *do*. We'll see—we'll see."

Somerford stirred the fire—footsteps approached—his heart beat—he might, in two minutes, know all—at least—

The door opened, and Butley, the master of the house, appeared before him.

"Fine night, Sir—rather frosty," said the landlord.

"Very fine, Mr. Butley," said Somerford—"all your family quite well?"

"All quite charming,' said Butley—"never nothing the matter with them, thank God."

Somerford sighed—he was physician in ordinary to the Green Dragon.

"Strange gentleman that is," said Butley, "who sent the message to you."

"Strange!" said Somerford.

"Yes, he came here, and was in such a hurry to send, I thought he was ill. Is he quite right, Sir?"

"Right!" said Somerford.

"Ah! isn't he a bit flightyish like?" said Butley.

"Hush, hush," said Somerford; "he'll hear us."

"Gad, he must have long ears if he does,"

said Butley; "I should think he's nigh five miles off afore now."

"How d'ye mean—is he gone?" said Somerford.

"What, didn't you know that?"

"Not I; I was waiting for him."

"You may wait long enough then," said Butley. "He came here on horseback, and could not have come very far by the look of him; his horse was waiting for him in the yard, and he set off up town as hard as he could lay legs to ground, when he came out of the room."

"I heard a horse gallop away," said the apothecary.

"That were he," said Butley; "he gave the waiter five shillings for the messenger, and the room, and the lights, and the fire, and all the rest of it."

"Do you know him?" asked Somerford.

"No, Sir," said the landlord—"don't you?"

"Not I," replied Somerford; "he told me he had a pacquet of papers to give me, which was up-stairs."

"He never set his foot on a stair in this house," said Butley.

"Why, then, I may go," said Somerford, "and all the story of the pacquet and the papers was just made up to get rid of me."

"I hope if he didn't leave any thing behind him, Sir," said Butley, "he did not take any thing away with him."

"No," said Somerford; "I had none of what he wanted, which was information—so, good night, Butley."

"Good night, Sir," was the reply, and Somerford proceeded homeward to relate his adventure to his wife, who was anxiously waiting his return. What she heard served only the more to inflame her imagination, as to her birth and parentage, and the first cross word that ever fell from her lips since she was married, was a snub to her spouse "for letting the stranger know how little he actually knew himself."

A woman never commits herself on such points—she seems to trifle, while she proceeds steadily in her course, and gains all without conceding anything; at least in the way of words. However, Somerford's contentedness and his avowal of unqualified delight in her society, soothed all, and after their supper of cold boiled mutton, and home-made pickles, served up at half-past nine, the doctor lulled his wife to drowsiness by reading, in the county newspaper, the details of the ceremony of the laying the foundation of the East India Docks, the promotion of Dr. Bathurst to the Bishop-

ric of Norwich, and the commitment to the Tower of Sheriffs Cox and Rawlins, for partiality at the Middlesex election; thus marking the period of Mrs. Woodley's decease and the stranger's visit, (which occurred in February, 1805, when Charles Somerford was about six years old,) from which time to the hour of Somerford's death, the visitor never re-appeared, nor did they ever hear further tidings relating to him.

The year following, Mr. Somerford, finding the neighbourhood in which he resided too healthy for business, and having no tie to it since the death of the Woodley family, but rather, on the contrary, many reasons for wishing to quit it, shifted his quarters to the neighbourhood of London. Charles was placed at Westminster school, and had the run of Maxwell's house, in which, as I have already said, although his mother seldom visited it, he was an almost constant inmate.

After the termination of his school career, the pursuits of the young man were hardly decided upon, when in 1815 his father died, and early in the following year, he obtained the ensigncy, was shipped on board the Mulligatawny, and by his abrupt departure caused the

scene, from which I have ventured for a few minutes to withdraw the reader, in order to enlighten him as to some of the secrets of the Maxwell family, just resuming the thread of my narrative, as the young lady has recovered her senses.

To a girl of sixteen, as Kate was at the period of this young man's departure, the events of such a day are memorable indeed. The horror of the shock she received was registered in her mind, along with the still more impressive scene of her mother's death, which occurred a few years afterwards ; and to those events she recurred daily, throughout the after current of her life.

When she recovered sufficiently to be conscious of her actions, she still believed she had been told that Charles was gone, only to try her feelings for him. Indulged as she had been up to that period, she could not account for the unlooked for severity with which she felt she had been treated upon this one occasion. She sought him in the different rooms of the house, called on his name—but she saw him not—he answered not—he was at that moment thinking of her, and her alone, in the floating tavern, in which he was at once a resident, and a voy-

ager. In the drawing-room, she found some flowers he had gathered the day she quitted town; they were still in the little vase where he had placed them; every word he had uttered during the process of arranging them to please her, was brought to her recollection. Neither Gray nor Feinagle could ever have established so perfect a system of mneumonics as Charles Somerford had thus created for the benefit of Katherine Maxwell. She gathered them up—pressed them fervently to her rosy lips, hid them in her panting bosom, and placed them in the inmost recesses of her writing desk—where—listen, ye sceptics—learn, ye unbelievers in woman's constancy—they rested, dried, shrivelled, and colourless as they were, aye even to the day before her marriage with Apperton, nearly ten years after.

I scarcely know how sufficiently to apologise to the reader, for having thus episodaically taken him so far back in the family history. It was my intention, never to have mentioned Somerford's name; but the communicative Mr. Crackenthorpe having blurted out so much, I felt it my duty to go the length of telling all I knew, although since that learned gentleman, at the same period that he mentioned his for-

mer acquaintance with Kate's early friend and lover, announced his death, it may perhaps be thought somewhat superfluous. Never mind—if the reader will consent to go on with the narrative, he may perhaps find out that I *had* a reason for troubling him with the particulars, which I have just had the pleasure to submit to his notice.

It can scarcely have been until this period of my story, that the reader has properly appreciated the peculiar situation of poor Katherine; and even when Mrs. Overall visited her the next morning, P. P. C., she, aware as she was of the real state of her feelings, with respect to poor Somerford, felt considerably puzzled to know whether she should communicate the intelligence she had received of his death; which, although it would utterly kill the hopes which Kate had long ago herself resigned, would, at the same time, painful as it must be, leave her more free and unincumbered by a feeling (perhaps undefinable) which might increase her unhappiness, in fulfilling her father's favourite project of marrying his finance minister. Jane, after a mature and lengthened deliberation with herself, and a debate and consultation with her husband, de-

cided upon breaking the fact to Kate as she had heard it, in which decision she was moreover strengthened, the following day, by her aunt, who, delighted to find that the Maxwells had set the example of reconciliation, had started, with four post-horses to her carriage, in order to grace the family circle, which clustered round the fire-side in Burlington Gardens.

To describe the conversation between Kate and Jane, since its aim and object are known to the reader, would only be to tire him with useless repetitions, and excite him perhaps by needless sorrow. Miss Maxwell received the news of Somerford's death, prepared as she had cautiously been by Mrs. Overall, with calmness and resignation; he had long been dead to *her*, and she even felt that his affections could not have been so strong, so genuine or so lasting as her own, since she had received but two letters from him, even before her father put his solemn veto on their correspondence. Kate, not thinking that such a father could upon such a point go the length of suppressing some of Charles's earliest communications, having satisfied himself by the contents of those, of the absolute necessity of extending the sphere of his authority to the farthest shores of India, in

order to prohibit an interchange of sentiments, feelings, and protestations, which, if continued, he felt assured could terminate only in the discomfiture of all his schemes and speculations.

There is no grief so severe as that we are forced to conceal. The sigh which might give relief must be suppressed, the tear must be checked ere it falls, and all the deep felt sorrow left to prey upon the heart and mind. Kate dared not even seem dejected on the day of the happy meeting of the family; even Godfrey Moss and his brother were expected to join the party at dinner-time; and, to add to her misfortunes, a favourable fluctuation in the shares of the Anglo Siberian Snow-water Company had so exhilarated Apperton, that he was to be seen skipping about the room, ever and anon clapping his two hands together in exultation with horrible concussions, and exhibiting the most positive degree of friskiness in his gallantry towards his intended.

There was yet another whose spirits were forced on the occasion—and that was Ned Maxwell. He found himself the discarded lover of a girl, whom he had affected to despise, and who, as I have said before, although so recently married, seemed, in assuming the title of wife,

to have thrown off much of her embarrassment and silliness. The triumphant and self-complacent air of the major, the extraordinary kindness and civility with which he was treated by Jane's aunt, and indeed the perfect felicity of the whole group, not excepting Apperton himself, were too much for his nerves and spirits, especially as all his unceasing endeavours to get another sight of his beautiful vision had been unavailing—all this, added to the constant expectation of seeing the two Moss Troopers arrive from the land of fens and fowl, full charged with provincial wit, and ready to raise a laugh against the defeated swain, made him appear as melancholy as his poor heart-worn sister really felt.

The day, however, passed over without the arrival of Moss and his brother; and the rein and a free course having been given to the little major, all further trouble, except listening to his incessant squeak, was abandoned. He described and re-described, in the most animated colours, his palace at Florence, and his suite of rooms at Rome, the often repeated delights of salad and maccaroni, the splendid equipage, and servants, Opera box, and the Corso at one, and the crowd at his receptions at the other; the glories of the

Sunday fireworks in the roofless theatres, the squeeze of visitors in his salon, magnificent, superb, wonderful, with six pair of red stockings on the staircase, and a boudoir full of princes.

When this tiresome jargon ceased, and the tender adieux were over, and all the company gone, and all the lights out, poor Kate stole to her room, and throwing herself on a chair beside the fire, hid her face in her hands, and wept copiously. The whole flood of her sorrow burst from her burning eyes, and she involuntarily sought and found the bunch of shrivelled broken flowers, which poor Charles Somerford had plucked ten years before—sad emblem now of his own fate!—Oh, that life could have been given to Charles by the sacrifice of hers—that she could see him once again—would she not give up years of existence?—and to think that she, in heart and soul a widow, should, within a little week, kneel before the sacred altar, and plight her faith and love to another—and such a one!

Now came too late the reflection that she had better have risked the negative displeasure of her father, and refused Apperton, than have linked herself for life with a being whom she could never fail to esteem, but whom she knew she never could love; for, strange as it may appear,

now that her Charles was irretrievably gone, and that the remotest chance, the weakest ray of hope, was utterly extinguished by his death, she felt more remorse, and more agony of mind, at having suffered him to be supplanted, (if not in her heart as he ought to have been), at least in her favour, than she even felt while he was yet alive, and might—but scarcely within the range of possibility—yet have claimed her as his own.

The hearts and feelings of women are so mysteriously constituted that it is impossible to account for their workings by any settled rule, or upon any fixed principle. Kate's sense of duty and firmness of resolution raised her above the dangers and difficulties of the conflict she had consented to submit to. She had, because she thought it right, obeyed the wishes of that father who had thwarted her and killed her hopes; but it was his to command, hers to obey: and reflecting upon the superiority of his judgment over hers, at the time of Somerford's departure, and arguing upon the blindness which ardent lovers suffer under, she reasoned herself into a measure, the horror of which never so fully glared upon her, as at the moment when she found herself liberated by the death

of her early lover from any dread of afflicting him, and utterly deprived of every hope of his regaining her.

Thus agitated, thus distressed, Kate remained until late in the morning, when, exhausted by the very fatigue of sorrow, she fell asleep, and awoke to welcome the day, which, by seven, only, preceded that of her marriage with Apperton.

CHAPTER X.

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven,
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio.
My father!—methinks I see my father.

SHAKSPEARE.

"So, so, Master Neddums," said Godfrey Moss, as soon as he saw young Maxwell; "you see it has all come to pass—eh—the major has jockeyed you—eh—didn't I tell you so?"

"You did—and I believed you—and I care nothing about it," said Edward.

"Come, come, none o' your trash, Master Ned—won't do," said Moss. "How came you to go writing your crinkum-crankum love stuff to the cretur the very day she ran off, if you didn't want to marry her?"

"I wrote under a wrong impression," said Edward.

"Yes, that you did," replied Moss; "you wrote under the impression that she would have you—not she. I knew when that little squeaking chap got down there, with his stiff neckcloth, and his little foot, and all that jigamaree stuff, you had no more chance than a cat in a certain hot place without claws—no more than I should have had; but I say, Ned, never mind she—have you heard about poor Charley Somerford?"

"I have," said Edward; "how did you hear anything about it?"

"Your father told *me* he had heard of his death," said Moss: "does Kittums know it?"

"Yes, poor girl, she does," said Edward. "I was too young when he left England to remember much of him myself, and, of course, I can only judge of him as a child; yet I remember I was very fond of him; but, for heaven's sake, don't say a word upon the subject, for my father does not know that Kate has heard anything about it—she told *me*, and so did my father, but the best thing to do is to take no notice one way or another."

"And so, Friday she is to be married," said

Moss, taking one of his double allowance pinches of snuff; "well, as folks bake, so they must brew, but, if happiness comes out o' that—why," —(another pinch)—"no matter—eh, Neddums, what's done can't be undone; and as the thing was to be, I am not quite sure that the young soldier chap's dying isn't the better for Kate."

Moss was one of the most agreeable companions possible, but posted as he was, during this conversation at the luncheon table, clearing the decanters of the several remnants of wine which lingered in their lower parts, his adhesiveness was remarkable, and Edward never felt his prolixity so powerfully, as at the present moment, he being all anxiety to "go his rounds" of the metropolis, in search of, or rather in the vague hope of meeting, her whom he considered the arbitress of his fate, and to whom he was attracted by an irresistible power; it was, therefore, with infinite and indescribable delight that he beheld his old friend finish the last drop of the last bottle, well knowing that so soon as he had concluded his self-imposed taste of *draining* —learnt, perhaps, in Lincolnshire—he would rise as well as he could from his easy chair—shake the snuff out of the wrinkles of his coat—borrow Ned's arm, and roll himself along into the front

drawing-room, where, having first disposed his legs upon a sofa, his snuff-box deposited with a book on a small table beside it, he would make his Kittums, as he called her, play him some of those airs, which, as he used to say, reminded him of foregone times—for Godfrey had been a winner of hearts in his day, and, with all his outward contempt for sentiment and feeling, a tear would sometimes stand in his eye, when he, for a moment, recurred to the events of his youth.

To this post having accordingly conveyed him, Edward hastened forth upon his daily pilgrimage. The legal cellars of Mr. Diveandpore were now wholly and entirely neglected, and exactly at the moment when the main stay of his idleness was cut by the marriage of his wealthy cousin, the young gentleman abandoned himself completely to the *belle passion*, and the pursuit of a phantom, which it seemed perfectly impossible he ever could grasp.

There are frequently presentiments and forebodings in the mind, which come to be verified under the most extraordinary circumstances. Edward Maxwell, who had never seen his incognita since the day after the arrival of the Overalls, when she caught his eye as he was

handing the bride of his rival into his father's carriage, felt when he left home a sort of assurance that he should see her in the course of this morning's "patrol." The day was fine, the sky (for London) clear, the streets were thronged with lovely women, whose eyes sparkled with vivacity and intelligence, and whose cheeks glowed with English health and beauty. There was a fresh air, and all nature seemed in activity. That most splendid of European streets, the pride of our metropolis, Regent Street, was crowded with carriages and pedestrians, and Maxwell was borne as it were, upon the tide of people which flowed towards the quadrant. Here, searching in every direction the beloved object of his hopes, he crossed, and proceeded by Sackville Street into Piccadilly, along which great thoroughfare he continued his walk, associating in his mind the Green Park basin with the mysterious lady. It was there he had last spoken to her—he might possibly see her there again—in short, fate or some other power quite incomprehensible by me, induced the love-stricken youth to wend his way in that direction.

The sudden fulfilment of an anticipation of this sort, has a most extraordinary effect upon the mind, and it sometimes appears, when events happen, in this manner, that they have actually

occurred to one previously. I apprehend that I shall not be able to make the reader at all comprehend my meaning—perhaps the feeling I should wish to describe is peculiar to myself, and therefore I give it up. Suffice it to say, that the effect the appearance of the young lady herself, walking slowly by the side of the Green Park basin, produced upon Edward, was something almost magical. He could scarcely trust the evidence of his senses. However, beyond a doubt, there she actually was. Now, had she come thither, as he had, because they met there once before?—She stopped—looked round, and was evidently waiting for somebody.

This shew of assignation, as it seemed to Edward, immediately altered the course of his proceedings. He resolved not to exhibit himself suddenly to her eye—but to watch *her* movements—see if some more favoured swain joined her—and, whether such were the case or not, and she retired from the ground alone, to follow and trace her to her residence—a measure, which, if not entirely consistent with good breeding, after his promise to the young lady herself, was considerably qualified, if not thoroughly warranted, by the *escapade* she had played off upon him at Charing Cross.

In order to effect his purpose with the greater security, the young general posted himself in the fruiterer's shop, between Clarges and Half Moon Street, and, like a sharp-shooter, hiding himself among the leaves and baskets of Messrs. Levy and Salmon, lay snugly watching the movements of the enemy in the field.

As his ambuscade is likely to last for some time, we will leave him in it, while we dispose of the Overalls and Mrs. Epsworth, to whose hotel Kate had gone after breakfast, for the purpose of seeing them start on their continental expedition.

The truth is, that the negative affection which Miss Maxwell had hitherto felt for her relation, Jane, had in the short space of four-and-twenty hours become nearly positive. The cause of this sudden change of temperature, the reader will, perhaps, find in the kind sympathy which Jane expressed for Kate, while relating to her the details which had reached her, respecting poor Somerford's death. There was so much of good intention and good feeling in Miss Epsworth's conduct on the occasion, that Kate almost loved her for it; and, independently of the desire to see again and take leave of her cousin, Miss Maxwell could not help fearing that she

had not made her gratitude to Jane sufficiently evident. These were some of the motives which carried the young lady from home immediately after breakfast; the others were indescribable, but, perhaps, intelligible to those who have fondly loved, and eternally lost the dear object of their affections.

Kate was in excellent time; the ponderous travelling carriage, yet horseless, stood before the door, and the major's valet, conjointly with sundry waiters, were loading and cramming every available hole and corner of it with the different necessaries of life, while Miss Scrimshaw stood on the steps of the hotel, affecting to shiver with cold, holding two very small parcels of her lady's moveables, about the secure stowage of which, she was, or seemed to be, most particularly anxious.

Mrs. Epsworth, whose constitution was delicate, and could not bear London air, (as the atmosphere of that foggy, smoky metropolis, is generally but erroneously called,) had made several desperate attempts upon her new connexion's good-nature, in hopes of being invited to join the happy couple in their continental tour; but the major, polite as he was, and anxious always to meet the wishes of the "charming, magnificent,

delightful, elegant, delishos crechurs," with whom he might be thrown in contact, was now married to Jane, and although she never spoke upon the subject of her "aunt's" going with them, her "aunt" had spoken of it to her, all of which the major knew as well as aunt or Jane themselves; but his mind was made up; a plump lady, as third, in a travelling chariot on a tour, is clearly *de trop*. Overall thought with the immortal deer-stealer of Stratford, that she would

> "Their *quietus* make *as* a bare *bodkin;*"

and had therefore resolved that on no account should her joining the party be permitted or allowed. And the major, who was a man of the world, was right; for after the inconveniencies of close packing, and travelling in a mash, had been overcome, and they were comfortably settled down in their home, still the aunt would have been *de trop*. Nothing makes more mischief, or causes greater inconvenience in a *menage*, than a mother or aunt living with her married daughter or niece: she seems established in the house as a sort of equity judge, to defend the rights of the wife against the encroachments of

the husband, and out of it she is considered as a domestic incumbrance, a necessary evil, who must be invited everywhere with her young relations. Besides, Mrs. Epsworth was a scion of the old school; the wealth which had descended to her niece had been accumulated by her husband as a merchant, and he having married young, married according to the circumstances of his youth, so that excellent as was her heart, and delicate as was her constitution, she would have made but a sad figure amongst the princes and princesses who were Overall's intimate friends on the continent; and although she possessed all the cardinal virtues, she would have looked uncommonly odd in a flirtation with an eminent pair of red stockings on a stair-case.

Jane was of the next generation, and she knew everything,—French and Italian were her ordinary mediums of conversation; in German she was a proficient, and as for accomplishments, she was actually finished, from the writing of epic poems, down to the commission of that lowest debasement of human intellect, called "oriental tinting," in the fulfilment of which, a great grown-up woman sits down at a table, and stumps brushes through holes cut in cards, and

so makes up "pictchurs," as she calls them, of birds and flowers in all their natural colours, and fancies herself an artist and a genius.

Kate arrived in the breakfast room at the hotel, just as poor Mrs. Epsworth had given up the last hope; and Kate, who was anxious to know, since she was aware of the manœuvering upon the point, how the affair was settled, endeavoured to blunt the pangs of separation from her niece and of disappointment of foreign travel, by begging her, after Jane and the major were gone, to come to Burlington Gardens, where she would be most welcome as long as she chose to stay with them.

This invitation was not *quite* sincere.—What invitations are?—for although Miss Maxwell had a great and natural regard for Mrs. Epsworth, still she was not an entirely suitable companion for her: but the truth is, that Kate's mind was so overburdened with sorrow, care, hope, fear, apprehension, and a thousand other feelings, that she thought, independently of doing a good-natured thing, by asking Mrs. Epsworth to her father's house, she should bring into the circle something new,—some object to divert attention and attract the conversation from herself; for when Mousetrap was their inmate,

it was necessary that he should have some mental food to exist upon: and although the gentle Kitty never designed to provide a butt for his shafts, in establishing Mrs. Epsworth in his neighbourhood, she felt no disinclination to use her as a shield, from which some of Godfrey's satirical darts might glance—at all events she gave the old gentlewoman the invitation.

This was the critical moment—it had certainly seemed, up to this period, more than doubtful whether she was to go with the young couple or not—all her *things* were packed up, and she was quite aware of the principle of leaving England light, in order to buy bargains abroad. Till this moment she had fancied although the major had received all the suggestions about her going with a *visage du bois*, that he was getting up a little gallant agreeable surprise, and she should find herself suddenly included in the party; but when this invitation was given, and the major said, "I'm sure, Ma'am, were I you, I should rejoice in accepting Miss Maxwell's offer—a charming house at all times to go to, delightful, pleasant, sociable, nice, and now, just after our departure, so much more agreeable than returning to the country by yourself—Jove!"

The die was cast—her fate was sealed; a pull

at the pin of the guillotine never more decidedly cut short mortal man, than did this little speech cut short the hopes of the good-natured, common-place Mrs. Epsworth. She thought it rude, but recollected in a moment that the major owed her no favour, that he had carried off her niece to marry her, and that his not increasing his love after the ceremony, was merely a fair return for her former want of courtesy or consideration towards him; although it should never be forgotten, that it was more than suspected at the time, that this worthy old gentlewoman, compelled as she was to make a shew of opposition to the major's advances upon Jane, in fact, very much sympathised with her daughter in her preference for that distinguished officer, to her cousin, Mr. Edward Maxwell.

Be that as it may, Mrs. Epsworth gladly accepted the kind bidding of Kate, who would have got through the affair with comfort to herself, had not the major, during the absence of his wife and aunt-in-law, chosen to let the poor girl into the whole secret of his being acquainted with the history of her first love, and even more, that he had himself been personally intimate with Charles Somerford.

The sound of that name, pronounced in a

high tone and with a sort of sacrilegious flippancy, as Kate felt it, overcame her.

"Jane never told me that you knew him," said Kate, her eyes filled with tears.

"She didn't know till this morning that I did," said the major: "it was in 1820—I was then in Calcutta. Hot furnace—melting—bungalows—burning—blazing—tremendous—he was stationed in Fort William—nice fellow—excellent—good—agreeable—"

"And," said Kate, scarcely knowing what she said,—"he was then in good health?"

"Perfect—perfect," cried the major; "perfect—firm as a farmer; but that's five years ago, and it takes less than that, with some people, to upset a constitution; the climate is fine up the country. I recollect he was a great favourite—pale—genteel—nice fellow—always melancholy—sad—sighing—heigh ho!"

"Poor Charles!" said Kate, unconscious of the sharp and vivid description the major was giving.

"He made his way prodigiously," continued his eulogist, "wonderfully—at head-quarters—got upon the staff, and was in high favour with the commander of the forces."

"Ah, Major Overall," said Kate, "I have no doubt of his good qualities."

"The good qualities you speak of, I am sure he possessed," said the major; "but for none of those was he indebted to his sudden elevation,—it was his carving—his carving that did it—capital carver—excellent—dexterous—no accomplishment more important. See a man stabbing a roasted-duck in a hundred places, while the smoking bird flies about in the gravy to elude his fork!—horrid—low—vulgar—it was his skill that way, exhibited one day at the mess, that won the heart of the general, who happened to be dining with us;—curious—odd—singular."

All this seemed nonsense, and barbarous nonsense, to the astonished and wounded ears of Kate, who had expected, as the tribute of friendship, some high eulogy on the exalted virtues of her lost Charles, and whose feelings of anger, mortification, and sorrow, when she heard that the loved object of her hopes had cut his way to rank and preferment, not with his sword, but with a carving-knife, are quite beyond description. She decided in a moment that the major was speaking falsely,—but she was deceived, for such was actually the fact; although perhaps the major would have done as well to have left

the foundation of his friend's fortune concealed: he had, however, yet not done his worst.

"However," continued he, for conscious that he would not have another opportunity of speaking to Kate upon the interesting subject for a long time, and really having in his heart the wish to soothe and console her, "however, for *my* part, I disbelieve the account of his death."

"Do you!" cried Kate; "why, Major Overall?"

"All that has been officially heard about it, is that he was dying when the last ships left the Cape of Good Hope, and that no expectations were entertained of his recovery; but," screamed the major, "while there's life there's hope."

"Hope," said Kate, "for whom?"

"Why, for young Somerford, and his friends," said Major Overall; "he *has* friends and relations I suppose?"

The silence which followed, induced the major, who carried on this conversation, while marching and countermarching from one end of the drawing-room to the other, to turn towards Miss Maxwell, when he discovered that she had sunk backwards on the sofa senseless.

This alarmed the man of war, and assistance

was speedily summoned; Jane, and her aunt, and the two maids, forthwith surrounded the poor girl as closely as possible in order to give her air, and the major rang the bell to order some hartshorn, which it was probable might arrive ten minutes after her recovery. But Kate was not a "fainting miss," the pangs she had to struggle with, were of no common order, and the last ray of hope that Charles still lived, at the moment when she had almost become reconciled to the belief of his death, and at a moment too when his existence ought not to be, and could not be, of the least importance to her future happiness, burst upon her so vividly—so dreadfully—and opened to her view such a lengthened vista of wretchedness and misery, that harassed nature could no longer support herself.

Removed to the adjoining room she gradually recovered, and imparted to Jane the cause of her sudden and violent illness, which was wholly attributable to the carelessness and flippancy of the major, who had, in the course of ten minutes, become an object of such perfect abhorrence to Kate, that it was with difficulty she could induce herself to receive his adieux, and some consolatory apologies for

his abruptness, when a squeeze of the hand from him, and a warm and fervent embrace from Jane, concluded the scene. Mrs. Epsworth, however, weeping bitterly at the departure of the bride and bridegroom, posted herself at the window to see them start, and as the carriage drove off, thought proper—whether naturally or for effect, I cannot at present determine —to follow Miss Kate's example, and fall into a fainting fit.

In this, as there can be no doubt she will speedily recover from it, we will, with the reader's permission leave her. And having seen the last of the Overalls, learnt the cause of Somerford's promotion, and thrown a little discredit upon the account of his death, we will now return to the fruit shop in Piccadilly, where we left Mr. Edward Maxwell, playing bo-peep amongst the orange-baskets.

Nearly an hour had elapsed since Edward had first taken up his position, and he had eaten a considerable quantity of grapes, cracked a profusion of almonds, and even swallowed sundry oranges, in order to keep his temporary landlord in good humour, and supply him with suitable rent; and still the delicate girl hovered about the same spot, until

at length he began to think that *he* himself must be the object of *her* search, and that by a parity of reasoning with that upon which he had acted, in visiting that part of the town, she had fancied his residence to be somewhere in the neighbourhood, and was now, in her own imagination, actually blockading him.

This idea once started, the fruiterer was paid, and Edward was proceeding to accost his beautiful friend, when, on turning round, he found she had a companion with her, who must have joined her exactly at the instant he had quitted his view of her, to put down his money on the counter of the shop. At all events, he could now follow, "and mark the road they took."

Accordingly he proceeded across the street, keeping a little in their rear, before he entered the park. She frequently turned her head, as if apprehensive of being discovered: he adroitly evaded her eye, and gained the entrance at the lodge; here she again turned; and instead of venturing to follow the couple along the broad walk down to St. James's Park, where, if she had looked round again, she must have seen him, he stopped in the angle of the

building, where he meant to remain until they had so far descended the hill, that he, by crossing the upper end of the basin, might keep them in a sort of parallel line, with himself, along the pathway across the grass.

Here he was snug; but his fear of detection considerably increased, when he found that, instead of proceeding downwards, they were about to take another turn round the water—they hesitated at the corner near Lord Sefton's, and in the interval Edward shifted his quarters, and got out of the gate again into Piccadilly, and placed himself so as to command them where they could by no possibility see him, and yet where he would be close to them.

He watched their progress—the man, who appeared past the middle age, seemed in earnest conversation with her: he wore a blue cloak, which concealed his figure; but the actions of both were energetic; he lost sight of them until they turned; he then securely looked at them—there she was, blooming in all her wonted beauty and charms, with the same bright eyes and pearly teeth; but Edward Maxwell saw none of them. The man, her companion, fixed and engrossed his whole at-

tention, and rivetted his look ; he doubted, hesitated—gazed again,—but as they came close to him, he was convinced—IT WAS HIS FATHER.

CHAPTER XI.

"With head up-raised, and look intent,
And eye and ear attentive bent,
And locks flung back, and lips apart
Like monument of Grecian art;
In list'ning mood she seemed to stand,
The guardian Naiad of *the Strand*."

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THE surprise, the astonishment, of Ned Maxwell at the sudden appearance of his respected and respectable parent, walking, with the greatest ease and familiarity, arm-in-arm, with the mysterious object of his search, were such that he was nigh discovering himself, by rushing from his concealment, across the very path they were pursuing. He, however, checked himself, and in a moment his mind was filled with ten thousand new feelings, new doubts, and new fears. He beheld his father,

the intimate associate of this lovely young woman, who had evidently been waiting for him; he saw by her action and manner, not only that she was speaking on some interesting topic, but that she was labouring under a dread of discovery. His father, too, appeared to him, to avert his face from the street as he passed the entrance, through which persons were going and coming, more thickly; and, finally, he saw them take the unfrequented path across the turf, toward St. James's Park, by which, before he had ascertained who the "swain expected" was, he himself meant to watch the young lady's progress, and trace her to her home.

But when he saw his parent, the being to whom his duty and affection naturally belonged, the partner and associate of the lovely girl to whom he was devoted, he was paralyzed—to follow, or to observe was impossible. If his father's intentions were benevolent, his object good, what right had he to search or inquire into his actions?—on the contrary, if his father in his after life, had, as many, greater, wiser, and better men have done, become a captive to the charms and fascinations of youth and beauty, what right had he to interfere?—yet he felt sick

at heart that he had seen them together, for now could he never separate them in his mind; he should meet his parent at dinner, and should hear the beautiful precepts of virtue and morality fall from his lips; he should hear him rail at the vices and follies of the world, but he should see in his mind's eye the bright vision by which he had been enchanted, and cease to respect the moral lessons of a preacher, whose conduct apparently so ill accorded with his precepts.

A young man more of the world than Edward, would have laughed off the discovery, praised his father's good taste, envied him his good fortune, and (as has been the case) discussed with him the charms of the mistress he had been so lucky as to gain; but no, the event of the morning was a dagger in young Maxwell's heart. Whatever might happen, it separated him from the dear object of his romantic hopes and wishes—yet—she might be some young lady whose family his father might professionally attend, and whom of course *he* need not know—but no, that could not be—this girl, lovely and graceful as she was, was alone, unattended by a servant—waiting too, in what amongst the middling classes of society is acknowledged as a place of assignation, one *grade*

higher than Harewood-Place, and two grades lower than Kensington Gardens; besides, her acquaintance with the thief taker—her subtle flight through the inn-yard, these were strong proofs of her inferiority of station, although neither her person nor her manner, nor her conversation, bespoke it.

At all events, Edward saw the impossibility of following them—he could not securely do so in the open space, since the lovely fair one kept constantly looking round; but in truth it was not the physical difficulty that hindered him; it was principle that checked him—the idea of watching his parent, perhaps to establish his indiscretion, was repugnant to his feelings, and he stood gazing on the, to him, "interesting" couple, till the undulation of the ground concealed them from his view—when they disappeared, all around him seemed darkness, he shuddered, trembled, and unconsciously retraced his way homewards.

Kate, meanwhile, had returned to Burlington Gardens with her new visitor, who, although she had consented to go there, rather than seem quite deserted, felt conscious that her presence, considering all things, could not be particularly agreeable either to Edward Maxwell or his

father. Godfrey Moss had seen very little of the old lady, but he had seen enough to make him hate her, which feeling, superadded to his sovereign contempt for Major Overall, promised any thing but a pleasant time for the dowager, as far as he was concerned. Indeed, taking all the circumstances into consideration, a more gloomy prospect never could have been prepared for half a dozen good sort of, good-natured, good-tempered people.

Six o'clock at length arrived, and the party began to assemble. Apperton brought a city friend; Mrs. Epsworth came down with Kate; Moss grunted in a corner when he saw her approach, and the words "poor old cretur," escaped his lips unconsciously. Edward presented himself—one thought it was cold, another said it was not quite so cold as it had been the day before, Kate considered it fine weather for the time of year; Mrs. Epsworth thought the days seemed shorter in London than in the country; Mr. Apperton's city friend ventured to suggest that the smoke in London made a considerable difference in the light. Edward asked if there were any news, Apperton told him the price of three per cent. consols, and Godfrey Moss entreated Kittums to order

dinner, and not wait for her father—Moss being of opinion that, where his appetite was concerned, the master of the house was a very unimportant personage.

At length, however, Maxwell himself appeared, apologizing for his lateness, as he had been unexpectedly detained.

It is scarcely possible to explain the state of Edward's feelings, when he saw his father as usual, placid, mild, almost venerable in his appearance, making his excuses for professional delays—the Green Park and the beauty were in an instant before the young man's eyes, and thence taking a retrospect of all the delays for which his respected parent had in like manner been in the habit of apologizing for the last six or seven years, he came to a decision somewhat more creditable to Mr. Maxwell's gallantry, than to his respectability; but this decision could not fail to be painful in an eminent degree.

At dinner he watched every word and action of the old gentleman's—when he saw his hand extended to raise his glass to his lips, the recollection that the hand of the beautiful unknown had been pressed by it, but a few hours before, flashed into his mind, and when he heard

his sire lamenting the depravity of some libertine, who added to his other crimes the dangerous one of duplicity, by which, under the guise of friendship and even morality, he rendered the destruction of his victims more secure, he nearly laughed aloud; and yet he wondered at the still placid deportment of his parent, and the ease with which he maintained a precisely similar conduct to that which he had ever adopted in the bosom of his family; a wonder, which, however, was gradually modified, as his son began to believe that the gaiety in which he had that day accidentally detected him was neither new, nor extraordinary.

"I hope, Mr. Moss," said Mrs. Epsworth, wishing at the earliest opportunity to conciliate, if possible, that terrible man, "I hope you will come some day and see me at Dulham."

"Whenever I have committed any crime which the law creturs shall think fit to punish severely, Ma'am, I will," said Moss. "No, no, none o' your country houses for me."

"I thought, Moss," said Maxwell, "you were a great admirer of the social parties at Lord Belford's, and the Christmas festivities at—"

"Pshaw, Mack!" interrupted Moss,—"so I

am. I like a handful of London put down in a house full of luxury and comfort, with just as much rurality as you please, and no more; and that in a space sufficient to let every man do as he likes; or give me a tree on a grass plot with a table under it, where one may smoke a cigar, and drink the ginnums and water, without offending any of your fine folks; either one thing or the other, but not such a place as that old body's."

Apperton's city-friend stared.

"Why, Mr. Moss," said Mrs. Epsworth, twisting herself into a thousand contortions of face and body to seem good-natured,—"I'm sure you can't judge of Dulham house, for you have never been there."

"No, Ma'am, but I know them as has," said Moss.

Apperton's friend, whispered "vulgar" to Apperton.

"And," continued he, "I'm told your's is what is called a regular family: breakfast at nine, and wait till everybody's down before you begin; dine at five, to which I have no objection, and after tea, talk conversation, or play shilling whist till ten, and then go to bed again."

"A very rational style of living, too," said Kate.

"What, without a cigar, and a drop of sommat, nice and warm?" said Moss. "No, no,—no go—however, I *doos* 'em even in such places as them, Ma'am: I make myself uncommonly agreeable to the housemaids, and so secure my little groggums in my bed-room, while I sit and smoke my cigar out of the window, if it is hot weather, or up him chimley if it is cold."

"But what does your servant think of your proceedings?" said Maxwell.

"Servant!" said Moss, "as if I ever travelled with a servant; no, Ma'am," continued he, addressing Mrs. Epsworth, "you'll never be pestered with a servant if *I* come to see you—one razor and a brush wrapped up in a bit of an old newspaper, does my toilet; I'm not over nice."

"Is he mad?" whispered Apperton's friend.

"No—only oddish," replied the stockbroker.

"And then, Ma'am, don't send one of the maids into my room in the morning by daybreak to light my fire," said Godfrey, "rushing in like a fiend, stumping and thumping everything about, as all them serving creturs do, on purpose to shew their independence."

"You shall do exactly as you like, Mr. Moss,'

said Mrs. Epsworth, "and have everything your own way."

"Well, we'll see, Ma'am," said Moss. "I can't promise; to be sure now, the young lady with her 'Ah, perdona,' or whatever you call the thing, she used to try to sing poor body, and that squeaking little cretur she has married are gone; it may be pleasant for a day or two."

"Come, Moss,—come, pass the bottle," said Maxwell, who evidently saw that an attempt to qualify his rudeness to poor Mrs. Epsworth, would only be adding fuel to the flame, and who hoped, by circulating the wine, to get the conversation into another current.

"Well!" said Apperton's friend to himself, shrugging up his shoulders.

"I see," whispered the stockbroker to his friend, "you are not quite familiar with the transactions of this house: we are as lively here, as in Change-alley."

"But with always a *bear* account, I should think," said his friend.

"Not so," said Apperton. "Moss is a shade or two better or worse, according to the fluctuation, but sometimes he is quite at a premium."

"I'll bet a hat," said his friend, "that that man never *can* be pleasant."

"Done," said Apperton.

Edward, who had listened to this give-and-take dialogue, almost unconsciously, for his eyes were constantly fixed on his father, was both edified and amused by its termination; for, although so nearly allied, as he would shortly be, with a city-man, he had never before heard of a bet of the nature now proposed, and did not know that hats are the circulating medium in the sporting world, east of Temple-bar.

"What a lovely day we have had," said Maxwell, who had arrived too late to join the meteorological debate which occurred before dinner.

"Lovely," said Kate; "Mrs. Epsworth and I walked for nearly two hours in the park."

"Which park?" said Maxwell, with unusual quickness.

Edward watched his countenance during the answer.

"Hyde Park," replied Kate, "and thence through the Green Park, to the gate opposite Clarges Street."

Not a muscle of his countenance was moved.

"What time was that?" said Maxwell.

"About three, I should think," said Mrs. Epsworth.

"*I* was in the Green Park, about three," said the elder Maxwell.

Edward would have given the world to speak, to ask one question, but consciousness, and the dread of his father's knowing that he had discovered his affair, kept him silent.

"What, *you* taking pleasure, papa?" said Kate.

"I was, I assure you," said her father, "and walked on, till I found myself—having passed through the park—on the other side of Westminster Bridge."

"Did the carriage follow you?" said Kate.

"No, my love," said Maxwell; "Robert, my coachman, was not very well this morning, and so I thought I would give him a little rest, and I did what I had to do on foot."

"But what took you over Westminster Bridge, Sir?" said Apperton.

Edward loved him for asking the question which he himself would have given the world to put.

"I had a call to make, Mr. Apperton," said Maxwell, in a good-humoured tone, but with a manner implying,—'What is *that* to you?'

Edward was confounded. The easy, un-

moved, unshaken readiness with which the old gentleman repelled every advance, and baffled every attack, astonished him; but it more and more distressed him, for he became persuaded that his respected parent was habituated to this sort of deception, and that nine times out of ten when he put on the same sort of decisive smile, and stopped further inquiry, by implying that the call he had to make was professional, he had in fact been devoting himself to some fair creature like her, who had been the partner of his walk that very morning.

All this struck deeply into Edward's heart. The debasement of his father in his estimation, by such a display of duplicity, was painful enough of itself, but when he recollected that in order to establish his father's impropriety and hypocrisy, his lovely companion must be degraded too, the wound was doubly severe: for a second time had he been wakened from his dream of love and happiness; the first discovery, however, that she was not the writer of the letter from the Golden Cross, restored him to peace and comfort; but the second left no hope, for if there were no necessity for concealment, or if the young lady were a present-

able person, or one who could be named in decent society, of course his father would have had no objection to mention that he had a companion in his morning's ramble, or that he had met a young lady, or indeed any part of the transaction; but, on the contrary, having ascertained that his daughter and her friend did not see him, he admits the walk, but carefully conceals every other part of the adventure; crosses Westminster Bridge before he knows where he is, and yet has a call to make when he gets there.

And then the affected humanity and good feeling towards the coachman, poor Robert, of whose illness not a word had been heard until this particular day, when the old gentleman thought rest good for the servant, and exercise good for himself; and then Edward began to recollect the frequent absence of his father on professional business, during whole nights, and especially when he returned with boots covered with country mud, and would give no account of himself, although he did not get home until long after breakfast; in short, Ned was sadly plagued, and when the ladies retired, it was with difficulty he could maintain a conversation, to which his father, unconscious of his son's

feelings, led with his usual gaiety, animation, and spirit, and wondered at the depression of the young gentleman, so evident to all the party.

"Have you been vision-hunting to-day, Ned?" said Maxwell.

This was rather too much—the father might have asked such a question, but from a rival, and that, as far as vision-hunting went, a successful one, it was too galling—he almost believed that his respectable parent knew that his morning companion was the vision itself.

"No," said Apperton, for Edward literally could not reply, "I rather think she has not deigned to appear of late—has she, Ned?"

"My dear fellow," said Edward, "spare me—there *are* points upon which jokes may be made, but I really do not think I deserve always to be selected as the subject of quizzing upon that particular one. I am young, and have at all events that privilege, at least, for being foolish."

"No foolery in being in love, Ned," said Moss; "we all have our time for it—every dog has his day, they say, and you and I, Mack, have had ours, haven't we?"

Yes, thought Edward, that you *have*, and have still.

"I wish you could once nail her," said Godfrey; "I should like to know who she is."

"Ah, there's no great chance of Ned's ever doing that," said Maxwell the elder; "the account he gives of the young lady convinces me, that he will never gain much by his acquaintance with *her*."

Edward was absolutely angry—he longed to proclaim his knowledge, and triumph over the foe—but that foe was his father, and he sat and writhed under the agony of thwarted affection, and injured pride, heightened by the irritating application of Moss's irony, and Apperton's matter of fact. All this, however, he bore for half an hour, when at length, and after a good deal of preparatory fidgetting, he made his escape to the ladies.

The peculiar circumstances of his peculiarly romantic affair, were then detailed for the enlightenment of Apperton's city friend, who volunteered another bet of a hat, that the flickering fair one was an impostor; during the whole of which discussion, the elder Maxwell argued, and reasoned, and, in short, said so much about it, that it was clear he could know nothing, and that whatever might have been the circumstances, which had so curiously thrown

the young lady herself into his society, and apparently under his protection in the morning, he was utterly and entirely ignorant of her being the object of his romantic son's arduous search, and ardent admiration.

Edward, however, appeared no more that night: in any other imaginable case, Kate, his kind, his excellent sister Kate, would have been his confidant and councillor, but on this matter she could not be spoken to—never was young gentleman more worried or perplexed; for although, if his father spoke sincerely, as to the direction in which he walked, from the Green Park, he had obtained something like a clue, (rather slender to be sure,) to the direction of the young lady's residence, still the very fact of her acquaintance with the old gentleman put an end at once to his wish of discovering where she lived, or who she was—and yet—perhaps if he could see, and speak to her again, and lead her to the subject, and mention his father's name to her, he might judge from the effect produced upon her of the nature of their acquaintance; for now, he very wisely resolved, if he met her the next day, not to tell her whom *he* himself was; and very naturally congratulated himself upon the accidental interruption which cut him

short, in his last walk with her, just at the very moment he was on the point of disclosing all, the particulars of his family, residence, &c.

Edward's favourite scheme at the moment, was to leave London in the morning; he literally dreaded to encounter his father—it was perhaps a strange reluctance, but I believe a natural one—he could not hide his feelings—he could not speak freely—he could not affect respectfulness—what could he *do*? He was aware that it would be foolish to quit town for so short a time as he could be absent; since three days only intervened between that morning and his sister's wedding day; a circumstance which of itself might account for the visible depression of that young lady's spirits, who seemed to prepare for her approach to the altar, as an Indian's widow would make ready for a suttee —The absence of anything like a flame, however, renders the simile somewhat imperfect.

It is the commonest possible observation, how extremely unpleasant it is to be in the society of two fond lovers—it is irksome in the extreme, for the poor creatures are unconscious of the exhibition they are making, and strive not to be particular, which renders the affair, if possible, even worse. To witnessing this,

by way of amusement, watching two lumps of sugar melting in the bottom of a tea-cup, is infinitely superior, especially when affairs are drawing towards a crisis—now at Maxwell's there was nothing of the sort to embarrass anybody; the conversation and manner of Apperton and Kate, were so calm, and so rational, that for all the visitors could know of the matter, they might have been married half-a-dozen years before.

Apperton's jolly white and red face bore on it no mark of care, or love, or woe; he stood with his back to the fire joking with his city friend, every now and then clapping his hard hands together with a loud report, expressive, as it should seem, of happiness, and independence; Kate sat working and talking to Mrs. Epsworth; while Moss in the corner was telling some uncommon good joke, evidently against the stranger of the day—the hat-better from Change Alley. Whist, however, was soon the order of the night; and when Apperton, Maxwell, and the stranger had cut for the lady, Mrs. Epsworth joined them, and commenced a rubber of longs—shorts being yet unknown at Dulham house.

Moss then wriggled and wheeled himself on

his chair towards the piano-forte, to which he ordered his Kittums, and there he fixed her, to play for his amusement; a huge tumbler of "sommut nice and warm," which he had (with a bit o'nutmeg a top on him) that evening instead of tea, because he warn't well; was set upon one of the candlestick places of the instrument, from which ever and anon he sipped, while he furnished a sort of prosaic running accompaniment to Miss Katherine's harmony, in which he poured forth the declaration of his bitter hatred of Mrs. Epsworth, and all her family, and his sovereign contempt for six-and-eightpenny Jack, as he christened the civic friend of Miss Maxwell's betrothed.

This evening, however, with all its old associations, its little fooleries and tricks, was destined to be the last of its race. The two following days were to be devoted to the preparations for the marriage, and the trip to Brighton. Miss O'Connochie was to be one of the bride's-maids, and she and Miss Fletcher, her fair colleague, were constantly in council with Kate and Mrs. Epsworth, upon points of dress and etiquette; for amongst other absurdities observable in society, high, low, or middling, is this most pre-eminent one—A girl is never on the

point of marriage, but she forthwith proceeds to order dresses, and petticoats, and bodies, and slips, and cloaks, and gowns, and pelisses, and all other such articles, as if, during the period of her existence, prior to her entering the holy state of matrimony, she had never worn any clothes at all. To be married is, it is true, to join one's fate with another's: but serious and heavy as are the religious and moral obligations which the change may entail upon us, as far as all the physical part of the affair is concerned, surely a lady does not want more gowns and petticoats after she is married, than she required before. By the system of bride-fitting, so universally adopted, people not reasoning upon this point would be inclined to think she did. Kate, however, was a rational clear sighted person; her object and desire were to avoid all shew and bustle; and since by a sort of tacit agreement, it had been settled that she *was* to be Mrs. Apperton, why, the quieter and simpler the proceeding which made her so, the better.

Miss O'Connochie was violent for cake and gloves, and Miss Fletcher was equally argumentative in the cause of favours, but Kate decided for neither, a decision highly approved

of by the bridegroom, who admired her economy, and saw no good in wasting money in millinery and pastry.

In the midst of these preparations, Edward, the once gay and animated, appeared wretched and melancholy; Kate saw the depression of his spirits, and laid it to the account of his strange attachment, without, of course, guessing at the real nature of his sorrow and abstraction; it was chiefly his father whom he wished to avoid; the restraint which the sight he had seen, imposed upon him in the old gentleman's presence, his grief at knowing what he did, and his anxiety to know more, the mixture of hope and apprehension, and the apparent impossibility of ever touching on the subject again, the respect due to a parent, which alike prevented his pursuing the object of his affections, and endeavouring to seek farther concerning her—altogether he was so completely beaten by circumstances that he evaded dining at home the two days previous to the "nuptial celebration," in order, not only to conceal his feelings, but to avoid the questions to which a change in his manner and spirits, of which he himself was perfectly conscious, would naturally expose him.

But fate had other trials in store for him; for when he least expected it, he again beheld his fair tormentor—this time, however, she was walking rapidly—as usual, unattended—and was hurrying through the crowd and bustle of Charing Cross, where, according to Doctor Johnson, runs "the full tide of human existence."

"This time," thought Edward, "she shall not escape me;" for, although it seemed decreed that their acquaintance was never to become more intimate than it was at the moment, still he would ascertain, if possible, her residence, and her name, in order to establish his father's morality, and restore him to his proper place in the respect and admiration of an affectionate son, from which the affair of the Green Park had so suddenly and so disagreeably hurried him. Accordingly, the young gentleman, at such a distance as ensured his safety from detection, followed the fair one until she crossed to the Strand; along the crowded pavement did the sylph-like creature glide under the *surveillance* of her anxious follower, until she reached the coach-stand near Wellington-street; here she stopped, and having secured a coach, stepped

into it; the direction whither to drive was given in a whisper to the waterman, and the vehicle drove off.

In an instant Edward was at the same waterman's side; a half-crown, slipped into his dirty hand, at the moment the question, "what that direction was," was asked, elicited a willing and immediate answer, "Tower Hill, Sir."

In half a minute was the ardent swain enveloped in a fast and nasty hack cabriolet, and very shortly overtook the coach, which contained his lovely idol—once in its wake, anxiously did he check the aspiring courage of his driver, which would have led him to dash past the heavy "crawler," but Edward bid his young ambition sleep, and charged him to keep where he was, in the rear of the carriage before them—so he did, and at the corner of that elevated space, oft moistened by the blood of traitors, did he, having extricated himself from the watch-box, on wheels, at the end of Thames-street, see the lovely fair one again tread the earth—she performed the unromantic task of paying the coachman, like any other commonplace every-day woman, and then proceeded to the stairs, leading to the river.

It was one of the coldest days of early spring,

it was getting lateish in the afternoon, and this beautiful young creature was going to embark on the water, a measure which, independently of its being, as Edward thought, extremely perilous to her health and safety, was particularly disagreeable to him, as he did not exactly see how he could follow her down the stream without being discovered.

The expedition, at all events, demanded caution; and accordingly having seen her off, in a boat, rowed by a sculler, Edward having given her time enough to be out of eye-shot of *him*, stepped into another wherry with a pair of oars, and directed the watermen to pull across the river, so that *he* could command her little bark, while she, unconscious of being watched, would even, if amongst the numerous vessels passing and re-passing, she saw another boat gliding among the tiers of shipping at anchor, never imagine that anybody on board of it, was intently regarding her progress, and, of course, would take no steps to elude the vigilance of his search.

Away went the wherries, at their relative distances for a considerable time, until Edward felt extremely cold, and the evening began to draw in; at length, however, the crisis of his

fate approached; the boat bearing the lady, neared a good sized merchant ship, distinguished amongst her neighbours for cleanness of appearance, the tautness of her masts, and the squareness of her yards; the waterman who rowed the lady gave two or three sharp concluding pulls, took in his sculls, and as the wherry had just way enough to bring her under the bow of the ship, caught the rope which was handed to him from the forecastle, and hauled up alongside in a most seaman-like manner.

In another minute "the chair," (half a cask wrapped up in a dirty red ensign,) was seen descending into the boat, and before a third had elapsed the fair vision was "whipped up handsomely," and received at the gangway by the master of the ship, who immediately released her from her bunting bondage, with all the gallantry of a thoroughbred true blue schipper.

"What ship is that?" said Edward to the waterman, as he saw, with the most unqualified surprise, the flight of his beloved.

"Can't say, Sir," said the waterman—"she looks like a Yankee, I think."

"Aye, aye," said his partner, "so she be—'Merricay built. She's the ship vot come up to them moorings in January last; don't you recol-

lect that Mounsheer chap as we brought up from her with the trunks, what was stopped at the Custom House about the *sea*-gars."

"Ah, so she is," replied the other; "I think they call her the "Villelmeney." She belongs here to Lunnun river," a name invariably given by jolly tars all over the world, to the pride of our country, "the silver Thames."

Having thus housed, or rather shipped the lady, Edward was rather puzzled what next to do, he ordered his rowers to lay too, for a minute or two, but when he saw the boat which had borne his idol to the Villelmeney, (which the reader may perhaps anticipate was the Wilhelmina,) returning up the river, having left her on board, his confusion became worse confounded—who was she—what could she be—did she live in a ship—was she the wife or daughter of the master,—was she going away in the ship?—how could his father have become acquainted with her?

In the midst of this perplexity the returning waterman neared them, and Edward gave the men directions to come up with him and ask whether the lady was going to stop on board.

They did ask, and the answer received was "No; she was a going ashore with the captain

in *his* boat, vich was the reason he varnt vanted no more."

It was now getting rather duskish, and had already gotten very cold, and the young Londoner was extremely chilly, and felt extremely awkward as to the instructions he should give his watermen; at length, the fog and the darkness coming on, and there being no appearance of the young lady, he resolved upon landing at the stairs nearest the ship, to which, of course, the captain would bring her; seeing that he thought waiting about on land, preferable to being afloat at that time of the day, and that season of the year; and, accordingly, consulting his rowers as to the most usual landing-place for persons coming from ships in the position of the Wilhelmina, he was pulled to the *chaussée*, and after paying the waterman, took up his position on a little sort of terrace at the head of the stairs, where he commanded a full view of the vessel, which was now more distinguishable by a light in her cabin-window, and a fire in her caboose, than by any other mark or feature.

Here did the patient sufferer walk up and down until eight o'clock; hungry he was not, for the anxiety of his heart destroyed, or rather superseded appetite, but very uncomfortable he

was, his feet were cold and wet, a kind of chilling mist hanging on his whiskers, and a sort of incipient tooth-ache assailing the right side of his face, when one of the habitual idlers of a landing-place who had been watching his patient progress up and down for some time, ventured, half from civility, and half from curiosity, to ask him if he was waiting for any body.

"Why," said Edward, "yes—that is to say —no—I think I expect a boat from the Wilhelmina, that handsome looking ship there—the captain's boat—I—that is—eh?"

"No, Sir," said the man, "I don't think ther'll be any boat from her, to-night; besides, the cappun' never comes ashore this here side, he lives somewhere about Bermonsey, and always lands the other side the water. I think his boat pulled ashore more than an hour ago, didn't it, Bill?"

"Ah, a precious sight more than that," said his companion, who was contentedly smoking a pipe, which he removed from his mouth just to let that information, and a curling volume of smoke escape at the same moment. This was by no means an agreeable announcement to Ned Maxwell, who, however, was not sorry to hear the fact, as it rendered his further stay at that time

needless; and truth to be told, the temperature of the night was just then getting considerably below love-heat; so he reconciled himself to the disappointment, by the reflection that his staying out in the cold any longer was useless, and accordingly resolved to make the best of his way towards the civilized world, and pay his new friend, the Wilhelmina, a visit the next day.

"Pray," said Edward to his first informant, "do you happen to know whether the captain of the ship is married?"

"Yes he be, Sir," said the man; "I knows that, from going off with different people from the stairs; he has got a wife, and she's a good deal on board with him."

"Do you recollect," said Edward, sharpening the fellow's memory with a shilling—"do you happen to recollect what sort of person his wife is?"

"Uncommon nice little woman as ever trod shoe-leather," said the man. "I tell you who she's like, Bill," continued he, addressing his messmate. "She's just sich another as Poll Button, at Redriff; just her make and shape for the life of it—she's uncommon pretty."

"And how does she generally dress?" said Maxwell, "smart, or——"

"Smart, indeed, I believe you," said the waterman; "only just now they are in mourning; so you see, on account o' that, Sir, she can't make herself over fine."

In mourning—and beautiful—although compared to Poll Button, it must be the captain's wife; but then his father, how should he know anything of a Bermondsey schipper's better-half.

"And pray," said Edward, "what is the name of the captain?"

"Randolph, I think they call him," said the man; "I takes it he's a bit of a Yankee born himself, but I'm sure I can't rightly say, because, as how, I don't know, not for certain."

"Randolph," said Edward, who, sceptical as he was as to his father's knowledge of such people, had gained much information, and not wishing to be ungrateful, bestowed his bounty upon his informant's friend Bill, telling him to go and drink the king's health.

"That I will, your honour," said Bill; "I sarved him and his father, two-and-forty years, and I only wish I had two-and-forty years more wear and tear in me, and that George the Fourth might live to wear me out."

"He's a right good 'un, is Bill," said the

other sailor, in a half whisper to Edward, growing familiar by dint of encouragement.

"Well, good night, my fine fellows," said Edward, "you know you need not say that I have asked any of these questions."

"Mum's the word," said Bill, shaking out the ashes of his pipe on the head of a post at the top of the stairs "I can guess what you are up to,—if I can't, I'm——but no matter for that,—close as wax—a fish swims deep, and says nothing to nobody. She *is* a pretty woman, your honour, and that's the truth on't."

"And uncommon like Poll Button, I will persist," said the other.

"But now," said Edward, "I am going to the west end of the town, which is my way?"

"Are you going as far as the Tower, Sir?" said Bill, who seemed to think that fortress the *ultima Thulé* of elegance and fashion.

"Oh, very far beyond it, indeed," said Edward.

"Well, but howsomever," observed the other, "if so be the gemman is a going further to the vestard, the Tower will be a liklish pint to take a fresh departure from. Now, Sir, come along wi' me, I'll put you in the right road,

and if you want a cast off to the Villylmeny any time o' day, or night either, Bill and I's the boys who'll give it you, your honour—ah—all free gratis, for nothing."

"Good-night, your honour," said Bill; "he'll shew you the right way, Sir; he's an uncommon good land pilot, whatever he may be on the river."

"Now, Sir," said the waterman, "this here's Broad Street, that ere's Cock Hill, just you keep your face up that way, and follow your nose, and you are sure to fetch the Tower right a-head o' you."

"Thank you, my good fellow," said Edward, and, overwhelmed as he was, with confusion at the history he had heard of Mrs. Randolph, he proceeded with all due speed on his homeward voyage. Accordingly, he shaped his passage through Cock Hill and Shadwell, to Ratcliffe Highway, and having walked until he was nearly exhausted, inquired his distance from the Royal Exchange, which being a standard created in his mind as indicative of the city, and of some place where he could, perhaps, get something like dinner, struck him first, and received for answer that the person whom he asked didn't

exactly know how far he was from the Royal Exchange, but that he was about a mile from the Tower.

To the eastward of the Tower, at nearly nine o'clock, in a cold foggy evening too, no vestige of a hackney coach, and nothing to reflect upon, but the discomfiture of his scheme, and the mysterious disappearance of his lovely vision, and all this too upon an empty stomach, which, although appetite still did not afflict him, affected him in the way of exhaustion, under the fatigue of mind and body, which, for the last four or five hours he had undergone; at length the well known turrets of the white tower were in sight, the broad ditch, the trees, the Trinity House in the distance, all spoke the vicinity of a coach-stand, and accordingly wearied out with watching and wailing, the distracted Ned was buttoned up in a convenient hack, and forthwith ordered the coachman to drive to a tavern at the west end of the town, where he could re-invigorate himself, without encountering the inmates of his father's house, amongst whom, as must be evident, his father himself was to him decidedly the most formidable under all the circumstances.

In the meantime his absence from home had created various surmises and many observations; but Kate felt no uneasiness at his continued absence, because, as she told her father, she attributed it to the presence of Mrs. Epsworth, which although, perhaps in itself, not enough to keep him from the family circle, was rendered by Moss and his jokes extremely embarrassing, and even unpleasant to him. To speak to Moss on the subject would have been to ensure double the number of jests and allusions, so that altogether, Maxwell himself, who loved quiet and tranquillity, and who had not of course the remotest idea of the real cause of his son's defection, bore his absence patiently.

Edward, unlike himself, did not return home until the family were gone to rest. One day only now intervened between the marriage of his sister, upon which occasion his attendance would be of course essential, and, therefore, he resolved to devote the morrow to the discovery of the besetting mystery of his life, to which he was anxiously led by the desire of being able, if possible, to meet his father, with a mind unburthened on the day of the wedding.

He appeared at breakfast, but his father was

not of the party,—he had gone out before the breakfast-hour, and bid the servants tell Miss Maxwell not to wait for his return.

"Come then," said Godfrey Moss, "no need of waiting to-day—no fear of his being killed *this* morning, as I never shall forget the day you kept me without breakfast for two or three hours, while he was out upon that mysterious visit of his, the night after the hullaballoo upstairs."

"Mr. Moss!" said Kate, looking at him with an expression with which she meant to awe him into silence.

"Oh, some indiscreet duchess, I suppose," said Moss; "I don't want to pry into the secrets of the prison-house."

"Kate," said Edward, who had grown from circumstances somewhat suspicious of his father's eccentricities, "what was that story?"

"Edward," said Kate, "I am surprised at your asking me. I have sworn, sworn by the most sacred tie of my life, my duty to my father, never to reveal what I saw that night, nor ever to allude to any of the circumstances connected with it. I wonder *you* should wish me to violate such an engagement."

"Why," said Moss, "by this time to-

morrow, Kittums, your conscience won't be in your own keeping,—you'll have a lord and master, and then you will have no credit for keeping a secret, now—"

"Let me entreat you both—be quiet," said Kate. "What I saw that night, even though at this moment I really do not know the meaning of it, will never be effaced from my memory."

"It wan't the ghost of your sweetheart chap in India, was it, Kittums?" said Moss, as he filled his mouth with a piece of toast, so well buttered as to bedew its corners.

The chord was touched that vibrated through Kate's whole heart and soul. Moss meant no harm, the thought struck him, and as he had no conception of such a feeling as fills the bosom of a woman who has once, and fondly, loved, he thought what he said was rather *piquante* than otherwise, and not particularly mischievous, at the moment, and under the circumstances, it was too much for Kate, she burst into tears and ran out of the breakfast-room.

"Upon my word, Moss," said Edward, "you are *too* bad;—why, what could induce you to say such a thing to poor Kate?"

"I didn't know," said Moss; "I'm sure if she bursts out crying about that cretur in India,

to-day, she ought not to marry Jack Three-per-cents to-morrow."

"But you know that poor Somerford is actually dead," said Edward, "and that she has only heard of his death within three or four days."

"Better be dead than alive then," said Moss, "if she's to be Mrs. Apperton; because now she knows that this poor cretur is in his grave or burnt, or whatever they do to get rid of 'em in them outlandish parts, it's no manner o' use for her to be worritting, and poking about. A dead man cannot marry a live woman, and so all for the best; he's gone, well, then, she may just as well marry Apperton as not."

"You don't enter into the characters of women," said Ned; "there is a constancy, a devotedness about them which is utterly unknown to man."

"Witness your friend Miss Jane Epsworth," said Moss: "there's constancy for you. Give us some more toast."

"I admit that I deserved to lose *her*," said Edward; "I neglected her—that's no case in point."

"Ah, no great loss neither," replied Godfrey.

"I'm sure with such a cretur of an aunt she never could have come to good; why that old body won't come down to breakfast for the next hour. She's as particular about her face and her figure as a girl of fifteen; and when she has done with her frizzles, and fronts, and furbelows, and all the rest of it, her properest place would be up in one of her own cherry-trees, to keep away the birdums."

"I wonder if Kate will come back?" said Edward.

"I hope so, poor dear child," said Moss; "for how am I to get my second cup of tea, if she don't?"

"That," said Edward, "was a curious event in our family,—that disturbance in this house, and my father's absence the whole night."

"Oh," said Moss, "I know, it's some fine mystery about one o' you fashionable creturs—put off matrimony too long—eh, I know—eh."

"But what could Kate have seen here," said Edward, "at the very recollection of which, she shudders even yet?"

"That may be all got up between them," said Moss.

"I do not give my sister credit for sufficient duplicity to *get up* a story," said Edward.

"I say, Ned," said Moss, "have you seen your visionary lady lately?"

"Not very lately," said Edward; "but why—"

"Why, because," said Moss, "I think your father is dreadfully annoyed, and cut up about it,—he thinks you will make some bad match —throw yourself away, or catch a Tartar, or something unpleasant."

"Does he express himself very strongly on the point?" said Edward.

"No," said Moss; "but in talking over your frequent absence from home, and your bad spirits when you are here, he mentions it—but —what am I to do for my tea?—do, Ned, go and see if Kittums is coming back."

Edward accordingly retreated, having finished his breakfast, and being too glad to get away from his old friend Godfrey, from whom he could gather no very correct information as to his father's feelings, and being especially anxious so to improve his acquaintance (not yet made) with Captain Randolph, of the Wilhelmina, that he might obtain some certain information with respect to the young lady herself, who must certainly be a friend, relation, or acquaintance of the worthy personage. He accordingly be-

took himself to the streets, *via* the surgery, and out of the pupil's-door, leaving Fate to take care of Mr. Godfrey Moss, who, in the sequel, was doomed to a long *tête-à-tête* with Mrs. Epsworth, whom he hated, and who, amongst her numerous other failings, in his eyes, never put sugar or cream enough into his tea.

It was past eleven o'clock when Edward found himself, with his face towards the east, starting on his Quixotic expedition; during his walk he arranged the course of his proceedings. He would go on board the Wilhelmina, see Captain Randolph, and state his anxiety to know who the lady was, whom he had traced to his vessel the day before; if she turned out, as he anticipated, to be Mrs. Randolph, he was armed with divers and sundry excuses and apologies, by the aid of which he might "back out;" and if she turned out to be anybody else, he might either obtain an interview with her, or, at all events, satisfy himself of her rank and connexions; and, above all, with the circumstances which connected her with that vessel. In short, Edward had settled the whole affair—had in his own mind conciliated the schipper, and even had been presented in form to the fair one, from whose lips he perhaps might learn the nature of

her at present perplexing acquaintance with his father.

To accelerate his progress, he had recourse to the hackney-coach system; and long before one reached the Tower-stairs, where he proposed to embark, not only because there was a pleasurable association in doing what the *fay* had done the day before, but because it would save him an overland journey to the ship, and, moreover, keep him from an entanglement with Bill and his co-mate, who, notwithstanding their good intentions, might, from being so much in his secret, do him some harm by their observations and remarks while alongside.

As it happened, he found the same watermen plying who took him down the day before, who were too ready to have so liberal a customer; and here it may not be quite out of place to observe, that the smallness of the fares legally allowed to watermen, affords one of the principal reasons why men pay such persons much more than they really deserve. The pittance awarded by the Watermen's Company, and sanctioned by the commissioners, is so trifling, that it would be barbarous to exact the labour required from the waterman at the price charged; the consequence is, that they are infinitely overpaid by

those who would confine themselves to the simple discharge of the fare, if it were at all proportionate to the work and to the losses the boatmen endure during a long and hard winter. Edward being bound by no fixed rule, had remunerated his two gondoliers so liberally that they flew to usher him to their wherry, in which no sooner was he seated, and the word Wilhelmina uttered, than she cut the parting water, and shot onward to the desired goal.

The day was bright, and milder than the preceding one; the sun shone, and the river was covered with vessels. Proud sight for our favoured, happy city—here lay the Swede, the Russian, and the Hollander; there swam upon our waters the Gaul, the Portuguese, the Spaniard, and the Dane. Here floated the striped flag of the Trans-Atlantic Republic, and there, in the breeze, was wafted the Prussian eagle, or the Danish cross; all bearing to our happy mart the luxuries of every quarter of the globe.

How well does the enlightened and talented Doctor Arnott, in his interesting "Elements of Physics," bring to our view the activity of the whole living population, for the enjoyment and gratification of their fellow-creatures. "In

England," says he, "a man of small fortune may cast his looks around, and say, with truth and exultation, I am lodged in a house that affords me conveniences and comforts, which some centuries ago even a king could not command. Ships are crossing the seas in every direction to bring me what is useful to me from all parts of the earth. In China, men are gathering the tea-leaf for me; in America, they are planting cotton for me; in the West India Islands, they are preparing my sugar and my coffee; in Italy, they are feeding silk-worms for me; in Saxony, they are shearing the sheep, to make me clothing; at home, powerful steam-engines are spinning and weaving for me, and making cutlery for me, and pumping the mines, that minerals useful to me may be procured. Although my patrimony was small, I have post coaches running all day and night to carry my correspondence; I have roads, and canals, and bridges, to bear the coal for my winter fire—nay, I have protecting fleets and armies around my happy country, to secure my enjoyments and repose. Then I have editors, and printers, who daily send me an account of what is going on in the world amongst all these people who serve me; and in a corner of my house I have books, the

miracle of all my possessions, more wonderful than the wishing-cap of the Arabian Tales; for they transport me instantly not only to all places but to all times. By my books I can conjure up before me, to vivid existence, all the great and good men of antiquity, and for my own individual satisfaction, I can make them act over again the most renowned of their exploits; the orators declaim for me; the historians relate; the poets sing; from the Equator to the Pole, or from the beginning of time until now, by my books I can be where I please. This picture is not overcharged, and might be much extended; such being God's goodness and providence, that each individual of the civilized millions that cover the earth, may have nearly the same enjoyments as if he were the single lord of all."

I make no apology for this beautiful and spirited quotation. The sight of the various ships in our port filled the mind of Edward with sensations, perhaps not unlike those of Doctor Arnott when he wrote this luminous recapitulation of the blessings of our country; blessings, of which not even the vile attempts of discontented agitators, exerted to the utmost, can destroy the value.

But where are we?—close to the spot where

the bright vision of the night before vanished from Edward's eyes.

"Why, Jem!" said the spokesman to his messmate, "she's gone!"

"So she is!" said his messmate to Jem.

"What's gone?" said Edward.

"Why that Yankee looking clipper, Sir," said Jem, "as was here yesterday."

The feelings of Edward Maxwell are indescribable: but the fact was so. The Wilhelmina had sailed at one o'clock in the morning, and was, at the moment of their arrival off Ratcliffe Cross stairs, somewhere about the Lower Hope.

Edward having ascertained this fact, of course returned. He would have followed her by steam, or by the road, and have perhaps yet overtaken her; but the next morning was his sister's wedding day, and he could not be absent; and thus, dispirited and miserable, he returned to London, just as uninformed as ever, about his fair *incognita*, and just as far as he was the day before, from any acquaintance with Captain Randolph of the Wilhelmina.

END OF VOL. I.

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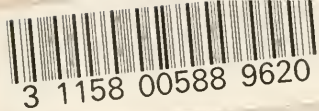
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